New probe of JFK's assassination: what Congress has turned up

The fantastic art and macabre vision of Edward Gorey

MARCH 19 1976 75 CENTS
THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

New Times

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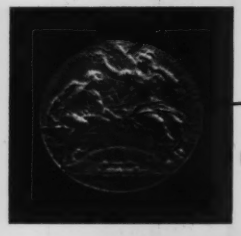

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MARCH 19, 1976
VOLUME 6, NUMBER 6

New Times

TOP OF THE NEWS

Congress and the JFK riddle

Congress, as everyone should know by now, is hardly the place to resolve anything, let alone something as complex as the JFK assassination. Despite good intentions, the Senate subcommittee that is probing the Warren Commission has apparently lost its way in a familiar hall of mirrors.

By Robert Sam Anson

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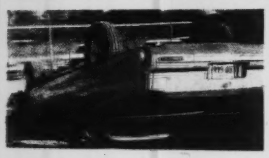
COVER
COMPUTER GRAPHICS BY PETER ANGELO SIMON/ DOLPHIN PRODUCTIONS, INC. ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH BY ALAN KROSNICK



TOP OF THE NEWS

Murder on the bayou

The traditional labor struggle is between workers and employers. In the backwaters of Louisiana, however, labor and management form a united front against outsiders. Waving axes, the protectors of the local establishment recently stormed a construction site and killed a man after an independent union entered their territory.

By Wayne Slater

Page 31

THESE ARE NEW TIMES

The fuhrer over est

Werner Erhard, the Duddy Kravitz of the human potential movement, is the quintessential graduate of his own training. Before you join the 75,000 other Americans who are seeking self-awareness through est, you should take a close look at the master himself.

By Jesse Kornbluth

Page 36

THE ARTS

A Gorey story

Millicent Frastley was sacrificed to giant insects. Little Neville died of ennui. Besieged by bizarre disasters, the characters of Edward Gorey's illustrated novels have charmed a small cult for two decades. Now the books of this eccentric dilettante are reaching a larger audience.

By Robert Cooke Goolrick

Page 54

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And now, for a word from your neighbor.
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Remembering H. Allen Smith, the screwballs' Boswell.
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Leo Cherne, Ford appointee, now monitors his CIA friends.
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Final Tribute
Let the (potato) chips fall where they may.
By Lewis Archibald
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Something for smokers to think about.

There are cigarettes and there are cigarettes. And if you're a smoker you certainly know by now which brand you really enjoy smoking.

So what makes us think we'll ever get a crack at switching you?

Well, we're going to try.

A lot of cigarette smokers smoke menthol. But they're probably just as concerned about the 'tar' and nicotine stories that all cigarette smokers have been hearing these days.

Frankly, if a cigarette is going to bring you flavor, it's also going to bring you smoke. And where there's smoke, there has to be 'tar.' In fact, in most cigarettes, the more flavor, the more 'tar.' Except for Vantage.

You must know that Vantage cigarettes have a special filter which reduces 'tar' and nicotine without destroying flavor.

What you may not know is that Vantage is also available in menthol.

Not surprisingly, what separates Vantage Menthol from ordinary menthols is that Vantage Menthol gives you all the flavor you want, with a lot less of the 'tar' and the nicotine that you probably don't want.

Now Vantage Menthol is not the lowest 'tar' and nicotine menthol you'll find. It may well be the lowest one you'll enjoy smoking.

Since you're the best judge of what you like about menthol cigarettes, don't just take our word for it.

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Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

FILTER, MENTHOL: 11 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine, av. per cigarette, FTC Report SEPT. '75.

Letters

Pictures of Charlie

We just received our February 6 issue and had to sit down immediately and comment on Sam Merrill's story, "The oldest living American at 133." It captured the beauty of this old man in such a way that it made our hearts break. We couldn't believe we weren't sitting across from old Charlie ourselves. God love old Charlie. For those who didn't read the article, run out and get it. . . it will put some real meaning into your life again. We are framing old Charlie's picture, which is truly a collector's dream, and it will now hang in the den.

The Ruth Hall Family
Anaheim, California

Democratic discourse

Marshall Frady is a meticulous observer. He pen-paints people and places with three-dimensional precision. "The Democrats" (February 20) is more than in-depth reporting of the campaign sideshow; Frady dissects with dexterity the pervading apathy in America.

Albert Covert
West Bloomfield, Michigan

How many Scotch-etherized muzzy monotonous dank prickly anthracite-dark evenings in the raffish gritty massively inert yet subtly lunatic Roosevelt Hotel did it take the burly pig-eyed razor-backed warty and oddly musky Marshall Frady to yawp out his barbaric thesis that (put simply) anybody who wants to run for president is crazy? Too many, I'd say; take away the adjectives and all Frady has to say is: I took a lotta notes and damned if they add up to anything.

Robert Hunt
Los Angeles, California

I thought Marshall Frady's piece on the Democrats was the most lively and informative analysis so far in the campaign. Instead of hair-splitting analysis of "issues" like abortion and inflation, Frady tells us what these fellows are like and how they seem, and that is really what the voters are interested in.

Frank Mankiewicz
Bethesda, Maryland

After reading Marshall Frady's article on the Democratic candidates I am puzzled by what his purpose was. Was it to display his wordiness or to say something informative about the candidates? Perhaps I should forget it all and explain his literary extravaganza by asking if his mother, during her pregnancy with little Marshall, wasn't frightened by a *Webster's Unabridged*, making him the genetic product of her fears? For what it is worth, I am a lifelong Democrat—aged 82 years.

Earl S. Johnson
Baldwin City, Kansas

I hope I never have the need to use a comma again. I fear Marshall Frady has used them all up.

F.A. Smith
Richmond, Virginia

Mega-hyping rock

I would have to fully agree with Janet Maslin's realistic review of Patti Smith (February 20) and *New Times'* candid opinions about other newcomers such as Bruce Springsteen (September 5, October 17). They are both sudden advertising sensations, but how close are they to being actual musical sensations? I would have to say, though, that Bruce Springsteen's initials do an excellent job of musically summing up this trend toward one-month triumphs of the advertising industry.

Jean Robaire
Los Angeles, California

Reporting on Reagan

I very much enjoyed Robert Sam Anson's critical yet sympathetic account of Ronald Reagan ("Reflections on Ronald Reagan's road show," February 6). Reagan is saying, it seems to me, that it is time to bring it all back home, back from Washington to where real human beings live, love, sweat and celebrate. He is singing not the praises of General Motors and the Chase Manhattan Bank, or of Washington wisdom and George Meany, but of the little people who are America. I think he's got something.

John McClaughry
Concord, Vermont

For those of us who yearn for the incomparable A.J. Liebling and for Henry Mencken and—God wot!—Sinclair Lewis, Robert Sam Anson has assuaged our painful awareness that their like is not easily come by. Mr. Anson's "Reflections on Ronald Reagan's road show" was reporting raised to its highest level.

Dorothy de Witt Neal
Santa Rosa, California

The cover story on ex-Governor Reagan was quite entertaining but there was something very strange about it too—very *soft*—as if your Political Editor was afflicted either by a remarkably sieve-like memory or a high degree of political naiveté. Mr. Anson may not be aware of it, but the Reagan administration in California presented a real threat to the livelihood and civil liberties of antiwar radicals. *New Times* purports to be a hard-hitting investigative journal. So why don't you do something to puncture the current myth that Reagan was a good governor? Mr. Anson's sentimental journey with the candidate tells your readers to forget the past and accept the notion of a New Reagan.

Burns Raushenbush
Seattle, Washington

Toting that bale

The "Tired of livin' " Final Tribute by Mark Goodman was fantastic (February 20). I was touched by his brief but remarkably sensitive analysis of Paul Robeson. While reading, I could not refrain from returning to the chorus line: "Let me go 'way from the Mississippi." It was this kind of moving, perceptive and logical tribute I'd looked for, but unfortunately could not find, in other periodicals.

Barbara A. Dinwieddie
Detroit, Michigan

Salvador Dali

I read with distaste your Insider item about Salvador Dali (February 6). Without any basis in fact, it was a gross exaggeration of a careless rumor discredited by responsible journalists in October and November 1975. Dali has no interest in political matters. He is a deeply spiritual man,

opposed to death inflicted on any man by another. As Salvador Dali's professional assistant, constant companion and close personal friend, I suggest your apology be offered.
Enrique Sabater
New York City
Editor's Note: We were wrong, and we apologize to Salvador Dali.

Scheering the CIA

The best thing to happen to *New Times* was the addition of Robert Scheer's column, The Ruling Class. Now it would appear that Mr. Scheer is not permitted to print what he knows about the CIA in Angola because of censorship by the editor and publisher (February 20). To hell with you!
Ted Means
New Orleans, Louisiana

Does Robert Scheer truly believe that "the most controversial aspect of the Angolan war concerns the entry of South African troops"? What about the thousands of Cuban mercenaries armed with the latest Russian equipment! Personally, I would be far more interested in learning why they are in Angola and how long they intend to stay than in the fact that Mr. Scheer knows the names of 17 CIA agents in Zaire.
Christie Hochschild
San Francisco, California

Telluride's trauma

When the deputy sheriff here illegally searched my house, he told me that the biggest drug deal in the U.S.A. last year was dropped and distributed in Avery. Sheriff Ellerd, as portrayed by Roger N. Williams in his article, "Rocky Mountain low" (February 6), isn't unique. Most every town has a Sheriff Ellerd who thinks "his town" is a major distribution center for drugs.
John Flory
Avery, Idaho

Granted, the infamous Telluride drug busts were a tragic and ignominious event, an event not soon to be forgotten in the hearts of many in this small town. Was it necessary, however, to drag that sorrow out before the nation, and in the process make the residents of Telluride sound like a group of fuzzy-eyed, drug-muddled dropouts? A majority of the population here does not use drugs, and your image is offensive and unfair.
Stella Pence
Telluride, Colorado

EMOTIONALLY EXHILARATING.
BUT IT'S SIMPLY CALLED,
"SMILE."

LAURA NYRO'S NEW SONGS,
ON COLUMBIA RECORDS AND TAPES.

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Behind The Scenes

In the fall of 1974, Contributing Writer Marcia Seligson called Jon Larsen with a story *New Times* just *had* to do: a small but rapidly growing movement called est. Two months later, in our first anniversary issue, *New Times* ran Seligson's piece. It was entitled "Does Werner Erhard have the answer?" and Seligson's answer was an almost unqualified "yes." Thousands of readers apparently agreed. As word of mouth about the article spread, we received so many requests for reprints that we exhausted our back issues and turned in desperation to our Xerox machine. Last June, *Cosmopolitan* reprinted the *New Times* article and was itself deluged with requests for further information.

We thought that would be the end of the est story as far as we were concerned, but we were wrong. Last summer, Contributing Writer Jesse Kornbluth dropped by our offices with the notion of doing another story on est—this time not on the training itself, but on its founder, Werner Erhard. The editors were interested, but it turned out est wasn't; its Public Information office was suspicious of another *New Times* story, so Kornbluth got an assignment from *Esquire*. Est rapidly became more cooperative. Kornbluth was invited to take a special training led by Erhard himself and was encouraged to believe est's founder would make time for a candid interview.

Like Seligson, Kornbluth took the training and came out of it quite enthusiastic. But his enthusiasm began to wane shortly thereafter, when his interviews with est graduates—and his work as an est staff assistant—gave him a different experience of est.

When it finally came time to interview Werner Erhard, Kornbluth found he had entered the world of Big Brother and Doublespeak. Est President Don Cox put him through an extensive "preinterview," which included a remarkable agreement Kornbluth was required to sign before Erhard would agree to a meeting. One provision—which Kornbluth refused to sign—would have had the writer pay $10,000 to a charitable foundation of est's choosing should he breach the agreement for the interview, the terms of which, Cox wrote, "will remain confidential and will not be reported or interpreted by you in any way in any communications you make whether in writing, speech or any other medium."

The last straw was a call from Cox, changing the ground rules once again: now Kornbluth was to tell Erhard every fact or opinion he planned to publish, and Erhard would merely comment on their accuracy—in short, a series of yes-or-no answers that would be more enlightening for est than for the writer. Kornbluth declined the "interview."

New Times reentered the picture several months later when Kornbluth's article ran into editorial difficulties at *Esquire*—and, a few

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE PHILLIPS

days after we bought the story, we first heard from est. Would we mind if two est representatives flew in from San Francisco to meet with *New Times*? I remarked that I had never heard of such a prepublication meeting, but I consented out of curiosity. It turned out that the est team wanted to read the manuscript; after an hour-long meeting, I declined the "offer." Before they left, the est people gave us a copy of their letter to *Esquire*'s attorney, stating that "should inaccurate, false and defamatory statements be contained in any publication, you may rest assured that prompt legal action will be taken." Soon after that, we received a six-page letter that itemized "allegations" we might publish—and for which we presumably might also be sued.

Even that was not the end of our bizarre est experience. Two sources interviewed by Kornbluth had confirmed the accuracy of their remarks both with him and with our researchers. A month later, they wrote us to recant their observations. That surprised everyone but Kornbluth, who had discovered that in at least one case a private detective hired by est had reinterviewed one of his sources in an attempt to find out if material damaging to est would appear in *New Times*.

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Following our publication of Bill and Emily Harris' story, we have received several inquiries about possible contributions to their defense. Please address future inquiries not to *New Times* but to Bill & Emily Harris Defense, 2025 Avon Street, Los Angeles, 90026. The second chapter of *New Times'* exclusive account of the SLA, as told by its four surviving members, will appear in an April issue of the magazine.

George A. Hirsch

You asked for a quality sporty car that you can afford to run. You got it. An interior which surrounds you with gauges. A 2.2 liter hemi-head coupled to a 4-speed plus overdrive fifth gear to move you on the highway at 36 miles per gallon. (1976 EPA 36 mpg on highway, 20 city. These mileage figures are estimates. The actual mileage you get will vary, depending on your driving habits, your car's condition and equipment.) MacPherson Strut front suspension, wide steel-belted radials on styled steel wheels, and power front disc brakes all at no extra cost.

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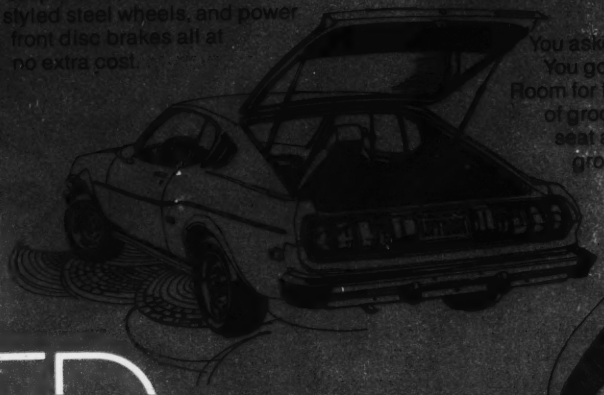

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YOU GOT IT.

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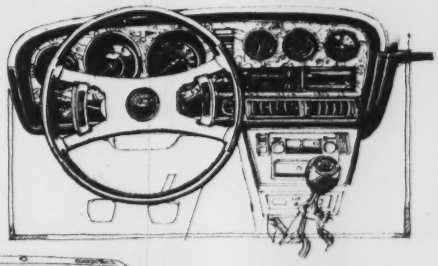
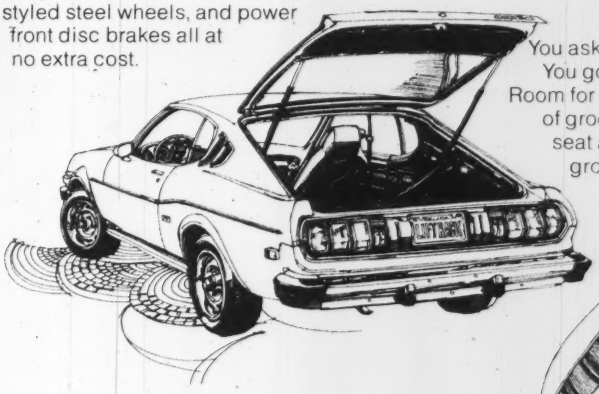
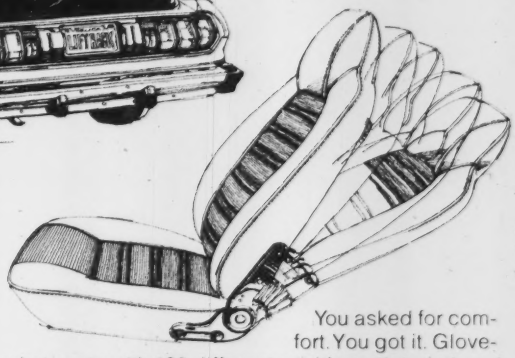
You asked for a quality sporty car that you can afford to run. You got it. An interior which surrounds you with gauges. A 2.2 liter hemi-head coupled to a 4-speed plus overdrive fifth gear to move you on the highway at 36 miles per gallon. (1976 EPA 36 mpg on highway, 20 city. These mileage figures are estimates. The actual mileage you get will vary, depending on your driving habits, your car's condition and equipment.) MacPherson Strut front suspension, wide steel-belted radials on styled steel wheels, and power front disc brakes all at no extra cost.



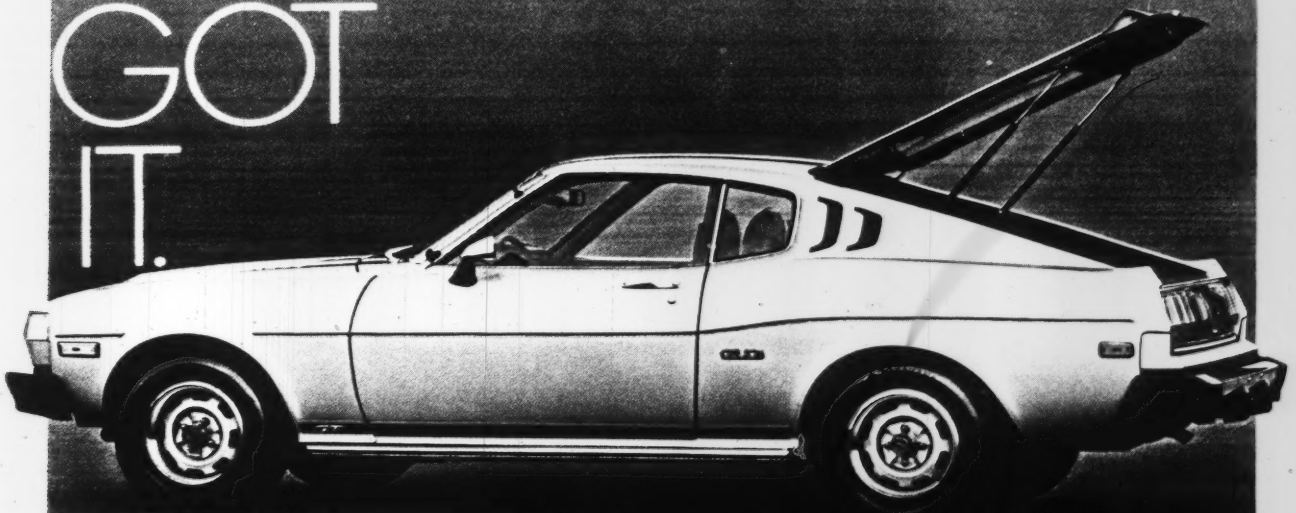
You asked for GT styling with room. You got it. The Celica GT Liftback. Room for four people plus nine bags of groceries, or flip down the rear-seat and two of you can haul the groceries plus a side of beef.





You asked for comfort. You got it. Glove-soft bucket seats with 120 different positions, tinted glass and AM/FM Stereo so you can boogie as you buggy.

YOU GOT IT.



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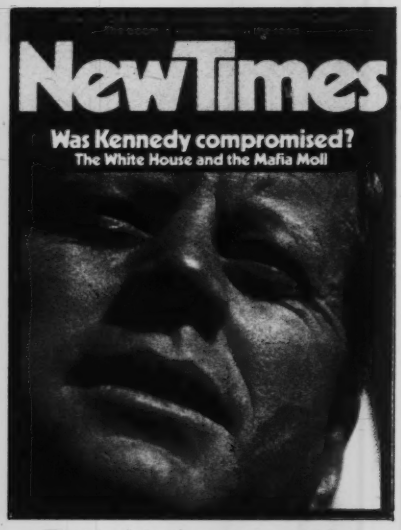

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all. We put est (Erhard Seminars Training) in the public eye. We reported the murder trials of Peter Reilly and Joan Little long before they hit the front pages. And so it goes.

What's happening around here?

NEW TIMES, more than any other magazine, is plugged into now. It's the magazine of what's happening, and that's a spectrum that includes love and music and lifestyles and all manner of rare new ideas.

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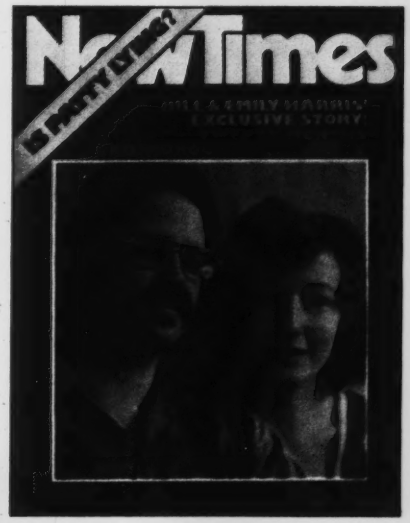

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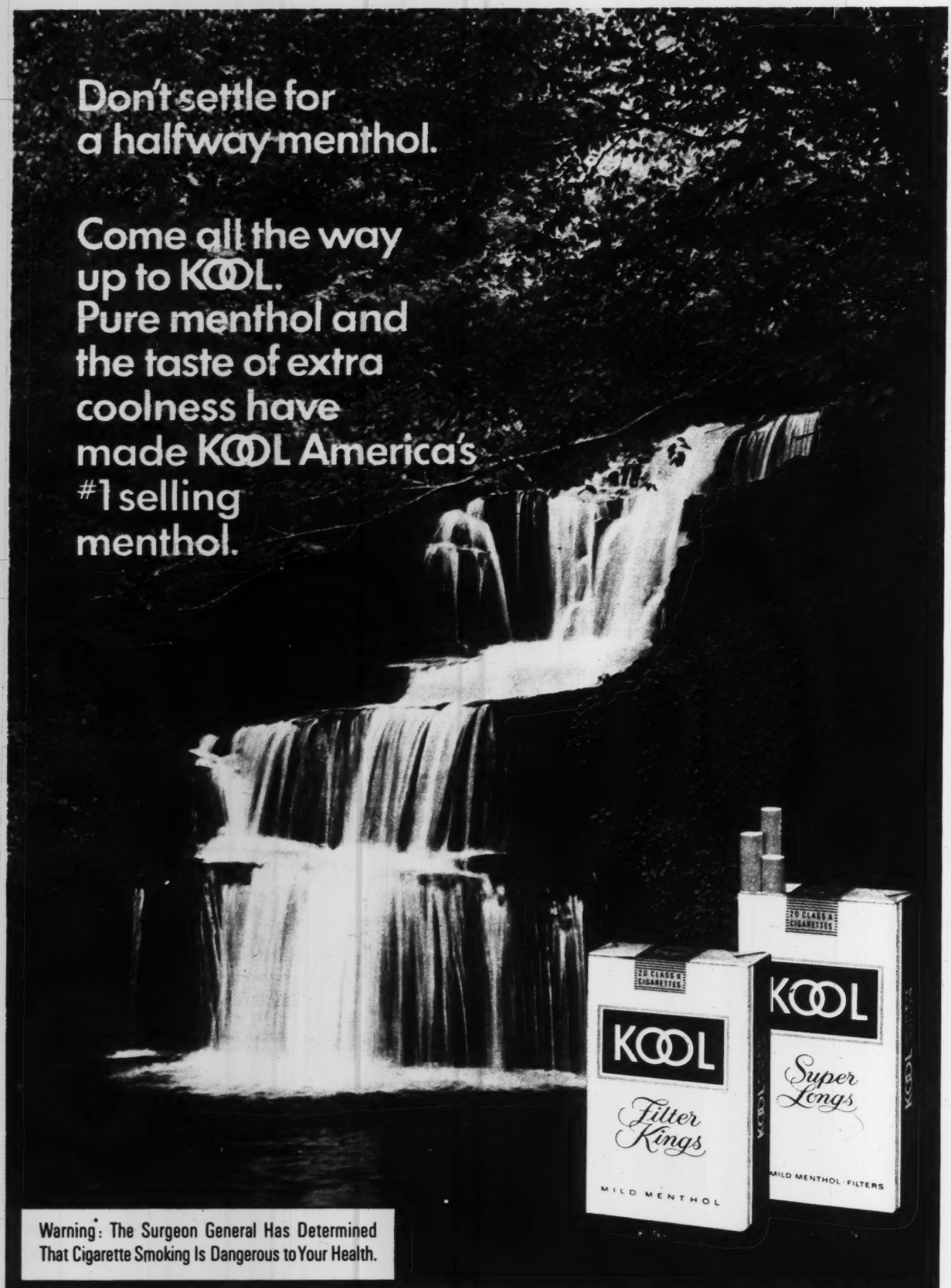
Women who murder
Female murderers fall out of the legal system all along the way from investigation to conviction because male officials cannot believe women are violent
By Janet Kole

NewTimes
The Feature News Magazine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Who are the real people?

Slow Down

By James S. Kunen

Ronald Reagan says, in his campaign speech, that he opposes school busing but favors "periodically busing some of the bureaucrats in Washington out into the country to meet the real people."

Does Ron mean that bureaucrats do not exist, that they are a myth? He can't mean that; if they don't exist, how could they be bused? Ron must mean that bureaucrats lead irrelevant existences, deserve no attention, and thus in a figurative or *metaphorical* sense are not "real people."

Who are the real people? This has always been a matter of speculation, because up to now there has never been devised a dependable reality test. But today, we have an unprecedented opportunity to study real people, because they are cropping up in droves in television advertisements, which is odd because advertising is the business of unreality, of creating illusion, of making products appear to be what they are not. An automobile becomes the love of your life. Detergent becomes fairy dust which secures a husband's love and stills a mother-in-law's acid tongue. An insurance man becomes an angel of the Lord who bestows everlasting life.

Into this melange of images strides a dowdy housewife, looking a little embarrassed to be on the wrong side of the TV screen, like Alice through the looking glass, out of this world. What we have here is the breach, at last, of that thin but heretofore impenetrable glass wall between the world of the real people and the world of the personalities, a barrier up to now crossed only by calamities and campaign stops.

Here, at her own sink, stands Mrs. Rita Medina, of El Cerrito, California, proudly telling us that 20 Mule Power tub and tile cleaner "just cleans better. That's it." But *is* that it? Who is this Rita Medina, anyway? How much does she know about cleaning? Above all, what is she doing on my TV?

Selling.

It seems we've been flimflammed a little too often by beautiful actresses. What parts us most promptly from our money these days is people like ourselves, people we can trust. They are such effective salespeople that last year, according to the Screen Actors Guild, 6,000 acting jobs in commercials went to non-professionals, or "real people," a term the Guild does not approve of.

Generally, the real people are found by the sponsor's market

ILLUSTRATION BY JOSEPH SMITH

researchers, who survey people at shopping centers, or by random phone calls, then go back to those who had something good to say and have them re-say it for the cameras. The Federal Trade Commission requires that the real person sign an affidavit that she is speaking her own words and means them. The real people are paid the same wages as a S.A.G. union member—$300 to $400 for a typical ad.

If a real person's endorsement is a tempting carrot to the consumer, a real person's humiliation is a potent stick. The typical humiliation ad is filmed by a hidden camera. The hidden camera itself teaches the viewer an important lesson—you never know when you're being watched. The housewife is urged by an interviewer (who is an actor) to test *her* product against the sponsor's product.

A Mrs. Garnett tests Comet against *her* cleanser on a sink that has tough food stains, pot marks and cooking grease. The Comet works fine. "How did your cleanser do?" the interviewer asks. "Oh well, it can't—it didn't compare with Comet," she admits. "In what respect?" he presses. "In—in saving time, for one thing," says Mrs. Garnett, haltingly. "So what do you think now?" Mrs. Garnett's voice quavers under the weight of a dawning realization: "Maybe—maybe I've been spending 20 years cleaning more than I should have."

From humiliation flows penitence and conversion. The chastened housewife resolves always to buy the sponsor's product in the future. And she no doubt brings the sponsor more joy than all the housewives who never strayed.

But do real people really attach so much importance to cleansers?

Mrs. Rita Medina was so pleased with 20 Mule Power tub and tile cleaner that she wrote a letter to the manufacturer, an inspired move on her part since it led to a role in an ad, which earned her enough money to buy a dishwasher. "I enjoy cleaning," Mrs. Medina told me with a chuckle.

A common motif in ads has one neighbor telling another of the latest technological developments in the laundry room. Does Mrs. Medina actually discuss cleaning with her neighbors?

"Oh yes," she laughed. "Especially when you have a stubborn problem. Of course, there are some people that you wouldn't discuss cleaning problems with."

Eureka! Here is the test of who is a real person and who is not: Would you discuss cleaning problems with him? Mrs. Medina didn't elaborate, but I suspect that she wouldn't discuss cleaning problems with bureaucrats. *Or* Ronald Reagan. ●

"For every heart and soul
You know the joy you bring
When you start to sing
Harmony, sweet harmony."

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Sweet Harmony
Maria Muldaur's new album

On Reprise records and tapes.

Goodbye to a friend

Fulminations

By Larry L. King

I was a 12-year-old kid with vague dreams of becoming the next Shakespeare when, in 1941, a New York newspaperman named H. Allen Smith published a book called *Low Man on a Totem Pole*. A zany collection of personal reminiscences treating everything from his rural Illinois boyhood to the celebrities and nonentities encountered on his newspaper beat, it zinged to the top of the best seller list. Somehow, in the bookless Texas precincts of my youth, I got my hands on a copy. I soon decided that I'd rather be H. Allen Smith than two dozen of your average Shakespeares. Over the next decade I gobbled up each new Smith book—37 in all—and welcomed him to my Writer's Hall of Fame with a ranking between Twain and Mencken.

Men get old and pass out of fashion. It happened to H. Allen Smith. Some years ago I encouraged the editor of one of America's leading magazines to bring Smith's wry perceptions to his pages. "H. Allen *Who*?" he asked. The editor was young; he had no idea that in the 1940s H. Allen Smith dominated the best seller lists almost as automatically as later would the Jacqueline Susanns or Irving Wallaces—though with such superior style as to embarrass one who mentions them in the same breath with Smith. Back before paperback books became as common as pig tracks, some 1.5 million of Smith's books sold—in hardback—in the 1940s alone. This led to a billing as "the best selling humorist since Mark Twain," and, for a while, he probably was.

The H. Allen Smith of that gentle era was salty to the point of a robust vulgarity in a time when timid publishers did not permit the language to be written as Americans actually spoke it. (In the late 1940s, remember, Norman Mailer had to settle for "fugging" in *The Naked and the Dead.)* Smith got around the puritanical inflexibilities of his day by inventing funny words or using acceptable words in such unusual combinations as to *suggest* the lower debaucheries in a way at once frustrating to the censors and titillating to his readers. Perhaps he was at his best in capturing the world's oddballs: rummy newspapermen, small-town barbers, con men, wing walkers, strip-teasers. He gave them twists recalling both Ring Lardner and Damon Runyon. The comedian Fred Allen said of him: "To Mr. Smith the world is a seething psychopathic ward, his fellow man just a pore-spattered husk that is concealing a story from him. . . . He is the screwballs' Boswell."

My first personal contact with H. Allen Smith came about eight years ago when he wrote me a fan letter. For

WIDE WORLD

obvious reasons, I was proud and flattered. But I also was shamed because I'd never troubled to thank H. Allen Smith for the hours of pleasure and instruction his work had provided me. In response, I wrote him those things all too tardily said. He then invited me to call on him.

I did not find, alas, a happy man. My old hero was a shade drunker than the ideal, and I could not catch up—though not for lack of trying. He spoke of his feud with the locals of Alpine, Texas, where—almost carelessly—he had chosen to build a home in his old age to escape a crowded New York. It was as if he sought again the simple rural climes of his beginnings. It had not worked out. "About three people in this town read books," he groused, "and I'm the *only* one who writes 'em. . . . Frankly, these salt-of-the-earth types make my ass want to suck a lemon." Smith managed to get quoted in *Time* along those same lines. The next time he went to the post office with a beer under his belt, the local badges arrested him and soon had him on the way to the lockup "for observation." Never mind that he was the sanest man in town.

On that first visit Smith proudly displayed his artifacts: pictures of himself with old cronies H.L. Mencken, Gene Fowler, Edna Ferber, Fred Allen, Stanley Walker; books by and about him; an oft-painted totem pole, a gift from his publisher when his first book made it big. He'd lost none of his salt. "Will Rogers was a lyin' sumbitch," he said. "Rogers once said he'd never met a man he didn't like, and I know damn well he didn't like *me*. Well, the feeling was mutual. He was a phony bastard." Shortly thereafter, Mrs. Smith diplomatically led him away for a nap.

Subsequent visits found my old hero sober or nearly so. "I don't drink until I finish a book," he said. "I'm sorta like the old boy who was asked to drinks on Thursday afternoon and said, 'I can't. I got an appointment Monday.' " One was reminded of what Fred Allen had once said of his old friend: "As it stands today, Smith doesn't imbibe. He has nothing against alcohol, save that it arouses in his breast an urge to fly kites in two-room apartments."

A few weeks ago, *Texas Monthly* magazine profiled him. The old curmudgeon did not much appreciate the article's inferences that he might be washed up. He lashed out with reminders that he continued to produce a book each year. He huffed that—though nearing 70—he was going to California to take on more magazine assignments. In late February he died there, alone in a San Francisco hotel room. I'll miss H. Allen Smith, but he left his books to console me. No small gift. ●

Leo Cherne, our man with the CIA

The Ruling Class

By Robert Scheer

President Ford's boldest response to date to the disclosures of CIA malpractice has been the designation of a new three-man board to supervise the Agency's activities. Just why this new board should be any more effective than the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board that has counseled the President for 15 years without making a single public criticism of the CIA must be explained solely by the fact that it has three members rather than 15. For the three, Robert D. Murphy, Stephen Ailes and Leo Cherne, are the same sort of pro-CIA hard-liners who made up the original committee. Indeed, Cherne has been a member of the FIAB since 1973. A few days after Cherne's appointment, the *New York Times* disclosed that the International Rescue Committee, which Cherne founded in 1946 and of which he has been president ever since, was the recipient of funds from the Kaplan Fund, a conduit for CIA funds. Cherne denied that he knew of any CIA links with the Fund, and directed press inquiries to one Gilbert Jonas, who had been the IRC public affairs director and fund-raiser. Jonas also stoutly denied that he had any knowledge of any such CIA links and echoed Cherne's disbelief that the CIA would be at all interested in the work of an organization dedicated to the simple humanitarian goal of helping political refugees.

But from its inception, the IRC was interested in helping only a certain type of political refugee—politicians and intellectuals who would be useful in the Cold War fight against communism. These refugees, once spotted and assisted by the IRC, were then—when useful—recruited and trained by various government agencies to form free world "movements" that would oppose the communists.

One of the political refugees assisted by the IRC was a fellow named Ngo Dinh Diem, who, it will be remembered, fled the oppression of his native land, where he had worked vainly for the French against Ho Chi Minh and was forced to find safety within the cloistered surroundings of Cardinal Spellman's sanctuary. After Dien Bien Phu, when the French sued for peace, Diem was brought out of his clerical mothballs and sent packing back to Saigon to save the day for democracy. Cherne followed Diem to Saigon, and, after much discussion with Diem and the U.S. in-country team, he was so impressed that he dispatched his assistant, Joseph Buttinger, an Austrian socialist refugee, to Saigon. Buttinger worked intimately for the next year with the CIA's top operative in Vietnam, Colonel (later General) Edward Lansdale. When I interviewed Buttinger and Lansdale in the

WIDE WORLD

mid-Sixties, both Lansdale and Buttinger told me that they met on the first day of Buttinger's arrival in Saigon. A scant four days after Buttinger's plane set down, the CIA man took the IRC representative to meet Diem.

Buttinger returned to the U.S. and helped Cherne found the American Friends of Vietnam, which mounted a massive pro-Diem lobbying effort in this country that had a great deal to do with getting the U.S. into the Vietnam War. The pitch was that Diem's government was a lonely democratic outpost against the Commie hordes. At one inspired dinner, Leo Cherne's IRC combined efforts with the American Friends of Vietnam to present Ngo Dinh Diem with the Admiral Richard E. Byrd Award for "Inspired Leadership in the Cause of the Free World." (Six years later the Friends group fired off a congratulatory telegram to the Saigon generals who had collaborated with the CIA in killing Diem.)

The Friends of Vietnam came into being two months after the public relations director for Cherne's IRC, one Harold Oram, signed a contract to have his public relations firm represent the Diem government in the U.S. Oram's "campaign director" on the Vietnam account was the aforementioned Gilbert Jonas (who later replaced Oram as IRC public relations director). Both men were registered as foreign agents acting for the Vietnamese government and both turned up as executive members of the Friends of Vietnam (and as PR officers of Cherne's IRC).

Since Jonas was the executive secretary of the Friends group and Cherne was an active board member, they should have no great difficulty in recalling the name of one Wesley Fishel, a fellow executive committee member. Fishel was the head of the Michigan State project in Vietnam: the story of that CIA cover is now well-known. Fishel was one of Diem's top advisers while his subordinate professor/CIA operatives in the project took over the Vietnamese secret police and several other agencies. For nine years Leo Cherne, Gilbert Jonas and Wesley Fishel formed an intimate political clique that attempted to mold American public opinion, and it has been amply documented that the Michigan State-Saigon end of the project was a CIA operation. Perhaps it is true that Cherne did not know of the Michigan State University-CIA connection, just as it may be true that he didn't know of Lansdale's CIA status. And maybe it is even true that Cherne did not know that the foundations that gave money to groups like his were conduits for the CIA.

But if all that is true, how in hell can it now be claimed that one so continuously suckered by the CIA—and one who has never so far as I know uttered any public criticism of the Agency—is now qualified to be one of the CIA's watchdogs? ●

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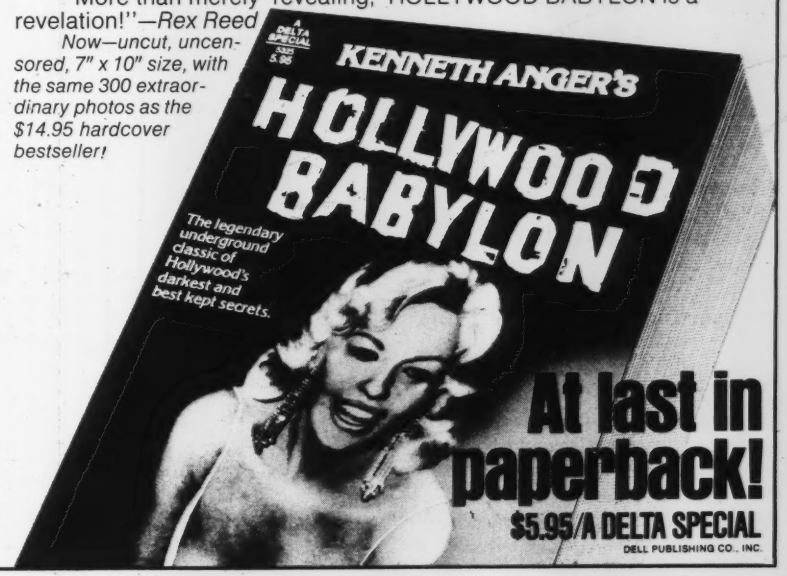


A bittersweet view of Nixon;
What makes Norman Mailer run?

EDITED BY
TONY SCHWARTZ

The Insider

Politics

The children's crusade

What issue strikes a deeper nerve than the Vietnam War and the Nixon pardon combined? Judging by a recent outpouring of letters to Congress in protest of a widely endorsed child care bill, the answer is parental prerogatives in raising their children. The bill creating the controversy is a

DIANA H. WALKER

Mondale: angry about "propaganda"

$250 million package that would offer services on a voluntary basis to needy families in the areas of health, education and child care. It is supported by groups ranging from the PTA and the AFL-CIO to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

"We've been receiving from 2,000 to 6,000 letters a day on the Child and Family Services Act," says Ellen Hoffman, staff director of the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Youth, chaired by Walter Mondale (D-Minn.). The letters contain unsigned fliers charging that Mondale's bill "would take responsibility of the parents to raise their children and give it to the government." The fliers also claim that government officials would physically "enter the home and direct the education" of children, and that parents would be denied any control over their children's lives.

Mondale blames the deluge of letters on "a totally fradulent propaganda campaign," and a committee staff member says that while the bill would offer such services as child day care to working parents, it would assume no control over the children's lives.

The campaign seems to have originated in Texas and Oklahoma, and, although there have been some letters from the John Birch Society and a large number from the Fundamentalist Church, committee members say they do not know who is behind it.

Will the White House see the light?

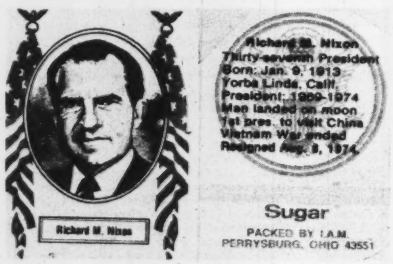
Next time the electric company threatens to turn off your lights for late payment, try explaining that you're just following the President's example. Seems the Potomac Electric Power Company has complained to one of its regulators, the Virginia Corporation Commission, that the White House—as well as the Pentagon and a number of other government agencies—is consistently late in paying its electric bills. What's more, the delinquent agencies simply refuse to submit the normal penalty charges levied on late payments. Unless current efforts to reach an amicable settlement are successful, a Potomac spokesperson says the company will begin proceedings before the appropriate utility commission to force compliance. In the meantime, you'll be amused to know that the simpler solution of one commission member has been rejected. Suggested the anonymous man: "Just cut off the White House lights for a night and then see whether they pay."

Sugar-coating Nixon

We were sitting in a small Florida restaurant recently, having a leisurely cup of coffee and absent-mindedly perusing the schmaltz that inevitably adorns sugar packet labels. In honor of the Bicentennial, the standard packet diet of bird, animal and flower descriptions had been replaced with pictures and capsule biographies of the 38 U.S. presidents. Our interest was piqued when we discovered that the single event attributed to Warren Harding's presidency was the "Teapot Dome Scandal." The capsule summary of Andrew Johnson's presidency was equally interesting: "Impeached by House but Senate failed to convict him by 1 vote." Things got positively dicey in the case of Ulysses S. Grant. He was described as "personally honest; administration beset by corruption."

Didn't these nattering nabobs of negativism have anything nice to say? Who should turn up in our bowl just then but Richard M. Nixon. His administration's memorable moments? "Man landed on moon; 1st pres. to visit China; Vietnam War ended." A little hard to swallow, we thought, for a man who has already left such a bitter taste on history's palate.

Our sentiments were far from unique. The manufacturer of the packets, International Automated Machines (IAM), has been receiving letters ever since Nixon's artificial sweetening first appeared. IAM sales and marketing vice-president, Robert Severance, would tell us only that two unnamed history professors wrote the biographies. He heatedly denied that



Nixon: revisionist history

any political factors were taken into consideration. "Let me make this abundantly clear," he explained. "We are in the manufacturing business, not the editorial business." Abundantly clear or no, our alert correspondent points out that the latest batch of Nixon

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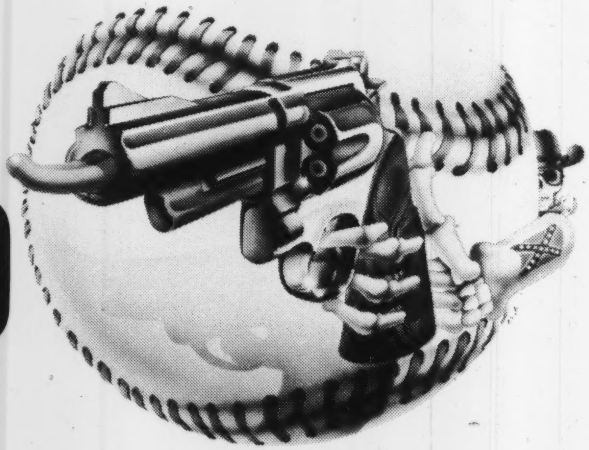

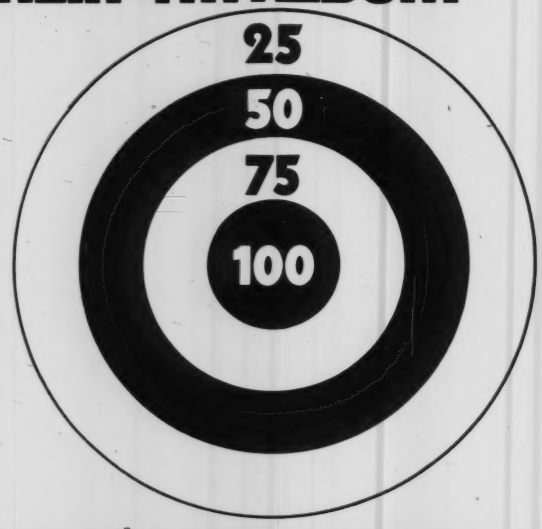

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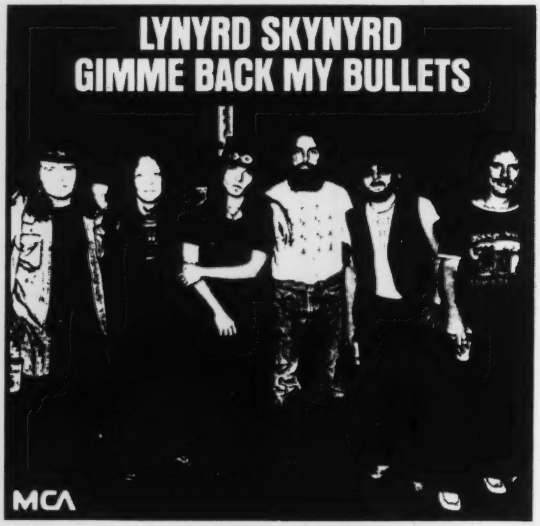
The Spring Tour		April	
March		2	Chicago
4	San Jose	3	St. Louis
5.6	Winterland	4	Kansas City
9	Sacramento	7.8	Boston
10	Fresno	10.11	New York
12	San Bernardino	13	Buffalo
13	Los Angeles	14	Detroit
14	San Diego	16	Philadelphia
16	Seattle	17	Pittsburgh
17	Spokane	18	Cleveland
18	Portland	30	Lakeland
25	Houston	May	
26	Dallas	1	Jacksonville
27	Oklahoma City	2	Miami
30	St. Paul	4	Little Rock
31	Des Moines	5	Memphis
		7.8.9	Atlanta



Produced by Tom Dowd

.MCA RECORDS

packets, which began arriving in restaurants two weeks ago, now contains at least an oblique reference to the disgraced president's major achievement: "resigned Aug. 9, 1974."

Period piece

This is an honest-to-God exchange between the ever-clever senator from Missouri, Thomas Eagleton, and William Scott, his Virginia colleague

WIDE WORLD

Scott: always good for a quote

and the man *New Times* once dubbed the dumbest senator of all. As first reported in Washington's *Newsworks,* the two were discussing Congress' lamentable inaction. Said Eagleton: "Maybe it's just congressional menopause." Replied Scott, after a thoughtful moment: "Yea, thank God it only comes once a month."

Spys for hire

While recent criticism directed against the FBI and the CIA may succeed in putting a damper on their covert spying activities, private enterprise remains free to teach similar techniques to interested law enforcement agencies. In fact, spy schools that feature the latest in undercover investigation and industrial espionage have begun sprouting up like weeds. Many are fly-by-night operations, but one of the most successful is Ancapa Sciences of California, an organization that contracts to teach everything you ever wanted to know about computer and electronic surveillance, systems analysis and human factors psychology.

Among its 20 employees are professionals with military intelligence, Law Enforcement Assistance and Drug Enforcement Administration backgrounds. Since its incorporation in 1969, Ancapa has completed contracts with state law enforcement departments in Michigan, California, Texas and Washington, as well as the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The company's specialty is the use of criminal dossiers and other information to effectively prosecute suspected terrorists and other radicals.

Ancapa has become a subject of concern to the American Civil Liberties Union in California, as well as to at least one legislator. Perry Bullard, a state senator in Michigan, is investigating possible civil liberties violations in Ancapa's contract to help the Michigan State Police put several law enforcement divisions under one omnibus anti-radical strike force.

The Word

Mailer than ever

A little story about the Prisoner of Sex himself: last month, Norman Mailer informed the woman he had been living with for the last six years, Carol Stevens, that he was having "something very intense" with a 26-year-old model. He told Stevens that he intended to move out of their Stockbridge, Massachusetts, home to Brooklyn Heights in order to live with his new love. The peripatetic author has been married four times, and Stevens, with whom he had a child, was widely—though inaccurately—believed to be his fifth wife.

Mailer broke the news to Stevens shortly before turning 53. Said a neighbor: "He came home one night with pictures of this model to show Carol. She didn't like it, but what could she do?" Now the couple's $80,000 Stockbridge home is on the market, and Carol says she is back to being "plain old me." So, for his part, is Mailer.

JILL KREMENTZ

Mailer: making his move

In his fashion

If you are Richard Burton, getting into a character is one thing and getting into a character's clothes is quite another. Burton is now appearing on Broadway as the lead in *Equus*—a psychiatrist who works in a rural English clinic and lives a distinctly modest existence. Director John Dexter tried to persuade his star that the role called for modest, even frumpy attire, but Burton would not relent. Dramatic realism, yes, but sacrificing elegance, no. So the actor performs instead in a Cardin suit, a Hermes tie and a Cartier watch.

VAN WILLIAMS

Burton: elegant as ever

Media

Making the soaps digestible

It is one of those sure-fire schemes so simple that you'll slap yourself for not thinking of it first: a magazine that capitalizes on the 20 million Americans who watch the soaps each day, many of them with near-religious devotion. The publishers of *Soap Opera Digest* realized that even the most fanatical viewers occasionally miss episodes of their favorite shows, and so decided to offer a monthly

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story-line synopsis of the 14 major soap operas (a 15th will soon be added—Norman Lear's *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman).*

The response to the magazine's high-powered television ad campaign has been extraordinary. Now in its fifth issue, *SOD* is printing 1.1 million copies, 400,000 of which go to subscribers, the rest to newsstands. With its mix of standard fan magazine gossip and star interviews, the magazine has struck such a responsive chord that letters are pouring into its offices. They range from requests for more information about performers to long letters from lonely women who shamelessly pour out their hearts to the editors. "We're not shocked that the magazine has done so well," says editor Ruth Gordon. "There's a lot of life in the soap operas and that's what people respond to."

Gay is glossy

The publication is a measure of the new direction that the once-noisy gay movement has taken—quiet but persistent efforts to build a network of aboveground institutions for homosexuals. A group of writers and editors in New York are attempting a glossy gay magazine that aims at literary excellence and eschews the pornography that is a staple of most gay magazines.

RICK FIALA/CHRISTOPHER STREET

"I wonder what Betty Ford would say about my first affair with a young man?"

The publication is called *Christopher Street,* after a well-known New York homosexual haunt that was the site of 1969's Stonewall rebellion. It hopes to go national after the first few issues. "There's nothing to read in most gay magazines," says *Christopher Street* editor Byrne Fone. "Either they portray macho all-Americans or the glitter folk." Instead, *Christopher Street* will feature *New Yorker*-inspired cartoons (like the one above) and serious articles such as the first issue's dialogue between Rita Mae Brown and Massachusetts legislator Elaine Noble. What remains to be seen is whether the magazine can attract the Madison Avenue advertisers it needs—and whether the mass gay audience will go for a special-interest magazine without flesh.

Mind & Body

Reversing directions

Several issues ago, we reported on a study revealing that one-half of all physicians in a sample of 4,500 failed to prescribe the correct antibiotic for a given infection. That's a disturbing problem, but two new studies show that even when the correct prescription is made, the medicine may not work. In such cases, the blame is often related to the patient rather than the doctor.

At Children's Hospital in Buffalo, New York, the parents of 300 children on liquid antibiotics were asked to bring in the medicine bottles when they returned with their children for a follow-up visit. Pediatrician-researcher Dr. Mary Mattar found that 53 percent of the children had been given less than the prescribed amount, and that more than one-third received no dosage at all after four days. Only 22 of the 300 parents—about 7 percent—had fully complied with the instructions on the prescription label.

Meanwhile, a Johns Hopkins University researcher who studied patients with chronic pain found that "the majority misuse whatever drugs they are given." Dr. Don Long, professor of neurosurgery, also discovered that "a significant percentage abuse drugs regularly in spite of appropriate instruction from their physicians." The study of more than 400 patients revealed that 97 percent of them used their medications inappropriately, irrespective of their physicians' advice.

A sunny side

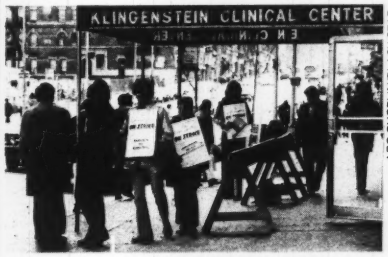
A cure for most forms of heartbreak still seems beyond the reach of technology, but researchers have finally closed in on at least a peripheral one—"the heartbreak of psoriasis." A disease as demoralizing

as it is difficult to spell, psoriasis has until now proven almost impossible to cure once contracted. However, Harvard researchers have hit upon a treatment that seems capable of curing 90 percent of all cases.

The therapy is a simple two-step procedure: the administration of a drug called Methoxsalen and the exposure of the characteristic red and flaking patches of skin to brief but intense short-wave ultraviolet light radiation. In a test on 300 patients at Massachusetts General Hospital and Vienna General Hospital in Austria, the two-part therapy cleared the skin of 282 subjects—a 94 percent cure rate—and failed completely on only 6 people. Based on such preliminary findings, the FDA is expected to approve the treatment for general use by the end of the year.

Striking stereotypes

Last year interns and residents in at least three cities struck for higher pay, and, as recently as January, thousands of MDs in the Los Angeles area turned away patients to protest soaring malpractice insurance rates. Are such



LEO CHOPLIN/BLACK STAR

Doctors: striking a militant note

local actions—once unheard of among physicians—now supported by the medical community at large? A recent poll by the American Medical Association determined that two-thirds of all MDs believe doctor strikes are morally justifiable. Predictably, the poll showed that the younger the doctor, the more strike-prone. Of those 35 and under, 84 percent backed the concept of strikes. But even among doctors over 65, the militants were in the majority.

Seventies

Getting the Benz

When Martin Lobell purchased a Mercedes 280 in 1973 for $9,297, he was confident that his car would be of the impeccable quality long identified with its maker. Since then, the

ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK CALKINS

Washington attorney has made ten trips to the repair shop, paid over $1,500 in repairs and written numerous letters of complaint. Finally, three weeks ago, he decided to file suit against Mercedes-Benz of North America, Inc.

Lobell had no idea that he was about to unleash a wave of high-class sympathy. Within days after word of his suit got out, he began receiving dozens of supportive phone calls and letters. The head of a prestigious Washington law firm—Burling of Covington & Burling—offered to turn the suit into a class action, and Lobell now plans to do so.

"I'm suing them for fraud for claiming that mechanics certified by Mercedes-Benz are competent, for false advertising for claiming that Mercedes-Benz is one of the best engineered cars in the world, and for negligence and breach of warranty." Lobell is asking for the purchase price of his car and for an additional $20,000 in punitive and aggravation damages. A spokesman for Mercedes refused to comment on the action, but the Federal Trade Commission—which has forced companies to publish corrections on misleading advertisements in the past—says it is "following the case with interest."

A Diamond in the rough

In the aftermath of the Sixties, institutions ranging from the Army to police departments have relaxed standards on hair length. Not so certain college campuses. Recently, singer Neil Diamond was scheduled to sing at Utah's Mormon-run Brigham Young University. Diamond seemed like a tame enough choice, and posters of the singer were plastered all over campus.

That was when the protest began. Conservative students at Brigham Young took one look at Diamond's moderately long hair, which clearly violated the university's strict hair-and-dress code, and recoiled in horror. "I submit that when we see a heroic 8 × 12 portrait of Neil Diamond, there is planted in many of us a desire to imitate," wrote one student to the campus newspaper. Added another: "The Social Office should refuse to even schedule a performer who does not meet BYU's standards. Seeing a picture is temptation, and seeing the performer in person would have a devastating effect on our testimonies."

As it turned out, Diamond went on with his show and drew applause from most of those in the audience of 15,000 when he chided critics for "worrying too much about what's on top of a person's head instead of what's inside it." Our Utah correspondent is now conducting a poll to see what effect Diamond's concert had on all those "testimonies."

WARING ABBOT

Diamond: its what's inside that counts

Congress and the JFK riddle

By Robert Sam Anson

"The Warren Commission is like a house of cards. It's going to collapse."

When he said that six months ago, Richard Schweiker sounded as if he meant it. The Republican senator from Pennsylvania looked tough, cool and confident at that press conference, even a little cocky. But, then, Schweiker could afford to be. According to the polls, disbelief in the Warren Commission Report was at an all-time high. Those who challenged the Commission's finding that a deranged lone assassin named Lee Harvey Oswald shot and killed the President of the United States could no longer be written off as paranoid fantasists. Not when members of the Commission staff itself were calling for a new investigation. Especially not when one of the Commission members joined them. That was Gerald R. Ford, the President of the United States.

So Dick Schweiker was confident, as he made the rounds of press conferences and talk shows, enjoying his new-found celebrity as the man who, after 12 years, would succeed where all the other investigators failed. After all, he had the tools: his own subcommittee, a staff, the power to subpoena and grant immunity for testimony, the run of all the classified information that had been locked away for so many years.

Those who talked to him in those early days came away impressed with his self-confidence, his determination, his guts. This was no Jim Garrison. Here was a no-nonsense, moderate conservative, a man used to taking on tough issues, as he had taken on Nixon over Cambodia and Watergate. He was not afraid to stick his neck out. One Warren Commission critic, who had been working on the case virtually full-time since the beginning, and had been left cynical and despairing, talked with Schweiker, then started laying plans for a celebration champagne dinner. Schweiker urged them all on. The

Despite high hopes last fall, Senator Schweiker's almost completed probe of the JFK assassination is bound to disappoint both critics and supporters of the Warren Commission

life expectancy of the Warren Report, he predicted, could now be counted in months.

It hasn't worked out that way. There has been an investigation of sorts; witnesses have been called; new leads have been uncovered and pursued. At this moment, a report is being drafted, which—when it is released, probably in a couple of weeks—will, according to Schweiker, "confirm and extend a lot of what the critics have been saying." There may even be a call for a full investigation by a special congressional committee. But even that is not sure. The promised public hearings have been forgotten. So has an additional two or three months of investigations. No major witnesses have been called. There have been no big surprises. And the Warren Report, that shakiest of constructions, is still standing, perhaps stronger now than ever.

There have been other failures, other disappointments, but, if only because of the people involved, this one is the most bitter. For if anyone should have gotten to the bottom of the Kennedy case it should have been Dick Schweiker. That he didn't says a lot about the assassination, and even more about the Congress of the United States.

There were problems from the beginning. To investigate at all, Schweiker had to get authorization from Frank Church, who heads up the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Operations on which Schweiker sits. Church, however, was icy to the project, evidently fearing that the controversy it would arouse might jeopardize his presidential ambitions. At length, Church went along, provided that Schweiker meet the full committee's March 15 deadline.

The authorization for Schweiker to begin investigating came in late September. It was not until two months later that serious work began, and, even then, there was considerable wheel-spinning as his staff went through the routine of gaining access to classified CIA and FBI material. "Why we even wasted the time looking is a mystery to me," says one disgusted Senate staffer. "You can be sure

The two familiar photographs above, discovered by Dallas police on November 22, 1963, helped establish Oswald's guilt—although assassination researchers believe, as Oswald insisted, that they are fakes. Marina Oswald swore she had destroyed the only other similar photo. But congressional investigators have now discovered a third photo, below—which only adds to the mystery. See the box on page 27.

that if there was anything in those files that was relevant, it was put in a burn bag years ago."

Another problem was deciding what was relevant and what was not. While Schweiker's mandate was narrowly drawn—he was to examine only the performance of the investigative agencies after the assassination, and what, if anything, they withheld from the Warren Commission—the sheer bulk of the evidence, some tens of thousands of pages, was enormous. Complicating matters was the fact that neither Schweiker's personal staff nor the half dozen researchers made available to him from the Church Committee had a thorough working knowledge of the intricacies of the Kennedy case. Indeed, until November, Paul Wallich, a Wall Street lawyer who was running the investigation, had not even read the Warren Commission Report, much less the 26 volumes of testimony and evidence, the more than 170 critical books or any of the material contained in the National Archives. To a considerable extent, Wallich and his colleagues had to rely on a few of the most responsible critics, notably West Coast physicist Paul Hoch and Sylvia Meagher, author of the seminal *Accessories After the Fact*, for guidance. Such guidance, however, was nearly always provided by mail or by phone. The investigators seemed leery of becoming too closely tied to any of the critics, whatever their expertise, and turned down offers from a number of volunteers for fear that classified material would be compromised.

Instead, the investigators spent much of their time working with the FBI and CIA, the very agencies that were suspect. The CIA was especially cooperative. "They were almost anxious to show us everything they had, just so they could prove that they had nothing," as one of the investigators puts it. Some help came from unlikely quarters. None other than James Jesus Angleton, the former director of operation CHAOS, had a lengthy chat with Schweiker during which he suggested that the investigators look into Yuri Nosenko, a KGB defector who provided Oswald's Soviet intelligence file to the Warren Commission. Angleton broadly hinted that the Russians might have had something to do with the assassination, which, considering the source, was a not altogether surprising suggestion. The CIA itself detailed Raymond Rocca to guide the Senate probers through the Agency's files. It was an interesting personnel assignment, for Mr. Rocca had performed the same chore for the Warren Commission. The results in both cases were identical. The Senate investigators, as had the Warren Commission before them, found nothing amiss in the CIA's records.

Meanwhile, at the FBI, Bureau officials footdragged and delayed, and only reluctantly gave up their files for inspection. Even then, the investigators were forbidden to make copies of Bureau reports, or even to make written notes from them. The sensitivity of the Bureau was understandable. For, unlike the CIA, congressional investigators knew, going in, that the FBI had not only withheld information from key Warren Commission staffers—notably, a 1960 memorandum from J. Edgar Hoover to the State Department warning of the possibility of an Oswald impostor—but had actually destroyed evidence: a note that Oswald had left at the Bureau's Dallas office two weeks before the assassination.

The Senate did not investigate the note; the House, however, did. California Democrat Don Edwards, chairman of the FBI oversight subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee and himself a former FBI agent, announced that his panel would, on a small scale, try "to set the record straight on just what went on."

Schweiker was looking for one startling revelation, the smoking gun. He never found it

As it turned out, the scale Edwards had in mind was much smaller than anyone imagined: three days of public hearings in October, devoted almost entirely to the Oswald note. One other substantive matter—Jack Ruby's having worked as a Bureau informer in 1959, a fact that was withheld from the Warren Commission Report—was, despite Edwards' initial assurances, ignored almost altogether.

As for the note, the House hearings failed to establish even what was in it. They did establish, though, that no one much wanted to talk about it. James Hosty, the agent to whom the note was addressed, swore that shortly after Oswald was shot to death by Ruby, he was ordered by Gordon Shanklin, the special agent in charge of the Dallas office, to destroy the note. This Hosty proceeded to do by tearing it into small pieces and flushing it down the toilet. Shanklin, however, swore under oath that the first he had ever heard of the note was when he read about it in the newspaper 12 years later, and vehemently denied ordering Hosty to do any such thing. Clearly, someone was lying. Edwards, however, has declined to investigate possible perjury—"It's a very tough charge to prove in any case," a staffer explains—while, in the meantime, the Justice Department has decided that what, in effect, is destruction of evidence does not merit criminal prosecution. "Maybe it would be different if Oswald were alive," says a committee man. "But he's not. The whole thing was probably innocent. The Bureau was just embarrassed. They get embarrassed very easily."

At one point, there was some thought of probing the source of that embarrassment. The Edwards committee was especially intrigued by the possible existence of a teletype that supposedly went to the New Orleans office of the FBI shortly before the assassination, warning that there might be some sort of violent attempt against the President during his Texas trip. The authenticity of the cable has always been questioned (the FBI flatly says it never existed), but the Edwards committee decided not to go further, after a phone call came in from Hugh Aynesworth, a reporter for the *Dallas Times-Herald*. Aynesworth, according to a committee staffer, advised that there was "nothing to the story, and asked why we were wasting our time going into it." What made the advice noteworthy is that Aynesworth is not just any reporter. Through the years, he has been one of the most vociferous defenders of the Warren Commission. He has also been a source of considerable disinformation. It was Aynesworth, for instance, who, in 1963, planted the phony story that Oswald was a paid informer for the FBI. All the same, Edwards' staff took Aynesworth at his word.

By contrast, Schweiker's investigators were willing to pursue obscure leads. It was not a lack of will that bogged them down, but time. The briefness of the investigation meant that many intriguing areas of inquiry had to be abandoned. Inevitably, this led to disputes among the investigators themselves over what was important and what was not. Schweiker's personal staff, which was beefed up with the addition of a prominent investigative reporter, tended to be more "hawkish" than the investigators from the Church Committee, though how much more hawkish they could not be sure, since the committee staff, which had become almost neurotically insecure about leaks, kept them in the dark most of the time. On several occasions, though, memos from Schweiker's office to the committee staff, suggesting areas of inquiry, went unanswered and apparently ignored. The committee staff was being cautious, careful to go through channels. "To some extent," the commit-

The incriminating photos: a deepening mystery

Of all the inconsistencies uncovered by Richard Schweiker's investigation of the Kennedy assassination, none is more startling than the new photograph of Oswald (see preceding spread). In appearance, this photograph of Oswald, socialist literature in one hand, the fateful Mannlicher-Carcano in the other, does not differ significantly from the two by-now familiar pictures, which were official Commission exhibits. The trouble is that the third picture, officially at least, is not supposed to exist.

Marina Oswald, Lee's widow, testified under oath that she took the two exhibit pictures on March 31, 1963, in the backyard of the Oswalds' home in Irving, Texas. She also said that there was one additional picture, which she burned shortly after the assassination on the advice of Marguerite Oswald, Lee's mother. The two exhibit pictures were discovered by the police the afternoon of November 22 during a search of Oswald's possessions. They were reproduced widely (one graced the cover of *Life*) and played an important part in establishing Oswald's guilt. The police officers who discovered the photos swore that there were two, and only two, poses of Oswald. Obviously, someone is lying.

What makes the lie the more intriguing are the circumstances under which the third picture, shown here for the first time, came to light. The picture was among some 40 other photographs collected, apparently as souvenirs, by a Dallas police officer. He subsequently left the police force and was later killed in an industrial accident. Before he died, though, he gave the pictures to his wife and told her to keep them in safekeeping. They were "sensational," he said, and could provide the family with a fortune.

Some months ago, the widow surrendered the pictures to a pair of would-be con artists. Schweiker's staff was tipped to the case by a Texas law enforcement official and managed to track the con men—and the pictures—down. The entire packet of photos was forwarded to the National Archives, which identified all but one of them as duplicates of photos in the Archives' possession. Only the third Oswald pose was new.

The existence of the third Oswald photograph casts further doubt on the authenticity of the other two photographs, which some critics have long regarded as fakes. Oswald himself, when confronted with one of the photographs during his interrogation, said that it was a phony, that while the head on the picture was his, the body was not, and that, given time, he could prove it.

Close examination of the photographs shows what Oswald was talking about. There are a number of problems with the pictures—the shadows under the nose, Oswald's stance, the broadness of his chin, the fact that the head size in the pictures is identical while the body is not—but the most damning is Oswald's height. By calculating Oswald's known height (5'9") against the length of the rifle (40.2"), two interesting possibilities emerge: either the rifle in the picture is two inches longer than the weapon found in the School Book Depository, or the man in the picture is five inches shorter than Lee Harvey Oswald.

Of course, if the pictures are fakes, they constitute evidence of an artfully constructed frame.

That possibility is all the greater with the sudden appearance of this third picture. Like so much else with the assassination, it poses more questions than it answers. How could the police have been mistaken about the number of pictures they found? Where did this third picture come from? And finally, what other evidence in the Kennedy case was lost, planted or stolen?—**RSA**

tee source explained, "you have to rely on the good faith of the people at the agencies." It was precisely that good faith, of course, that was in question.

Blinded or not, Schweiker's investigation uncovered nothing sinister in the behavior of the FBI and CIA, before or after the assassination. What has been assembled is a catalogue of missed opportunities, of interesting leads and bits of information that, with benefit of 12 years hindsight, clearly should have been followed up but, for some reason, weren't. "You can see how this whole thing might have gone a different way, how they might have come up with very different conclusions if they had followed some of this material up," says Schweiker. "Of course, we're only evaluating the evidence that is in the files, the stuff that ended up in the vacuum cleaner. You wonder, looking at it, what didn't end up in the vacuum cleaner."

To try and get an answer, the investigators interviewed a number of men who operated the "vacuum cleaner." In all, more than two dozen witnesses have been questioned, nearly all of them past or present members of investigative agencies. None of them had to be served with subpoenas or granted immunity, which perhaps explains why their testimony has been so unremarkable. As far as anyone can tell, the mistakes they made in investigating John Kennedy's murder were human ones, the natural consequences of working in a bureaucracy. With few exceptions, people who actually knew Lee Harvey Oswald have not been interviewed, including, unaccountably, the person who knew him best and who herself has been the object of intense suspicion, his widow, Marina. Says one frustrated investigator: "It's maddening. The more you get into it, the more you know that something is there. You just feel it in your gut that the answer is there, but you can't get your hand on it."

The one place where Schweiker wanted to break new ground was Cuba. It is a natural place to look. Oswald himself was some sort of Cuban partisan, whether pro- or anti-Castro has never been determined. If, as has long been suspected, his chairmanship of a fictitious chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee was actually a cover for intelligence work, it would, of course, throw Oswald and the assassination into an entirely different light. The trouble is that sorting out whether a man is a double agent is, as agents themselves told Schweiker, perhaps the most difficult task in intelligence work. As Schweiker himself puts it: "When you get into this stuff, you're really walking down a hall of mirrors."

The hall of mirrors turned out to be just that. Schweiker kept pursuing leads, and they kept going nowhere. There was a tale told by Clare Boothe Luce, for instance. During the early Sixties, Mrs. Luce, along with other wealthy, conservative Americans, financed an exile gunboat to raid Cuba—this at a time when Kennedy had ordered the CIA to halt all raids against Cuba. Thanks to people like Mrs. Luce, the CIA was able to get around this inconvenient prohibition. The night of the assassination, Clare and Henry were at home, watching the television reports from Dallas, when the phone rang. It was a member of the boat crew, calling to say that he knew Oswald, that he had tried to infiltrate the anti-Castro movement, had talked of killing Kennedy and was, in fact, part of a team

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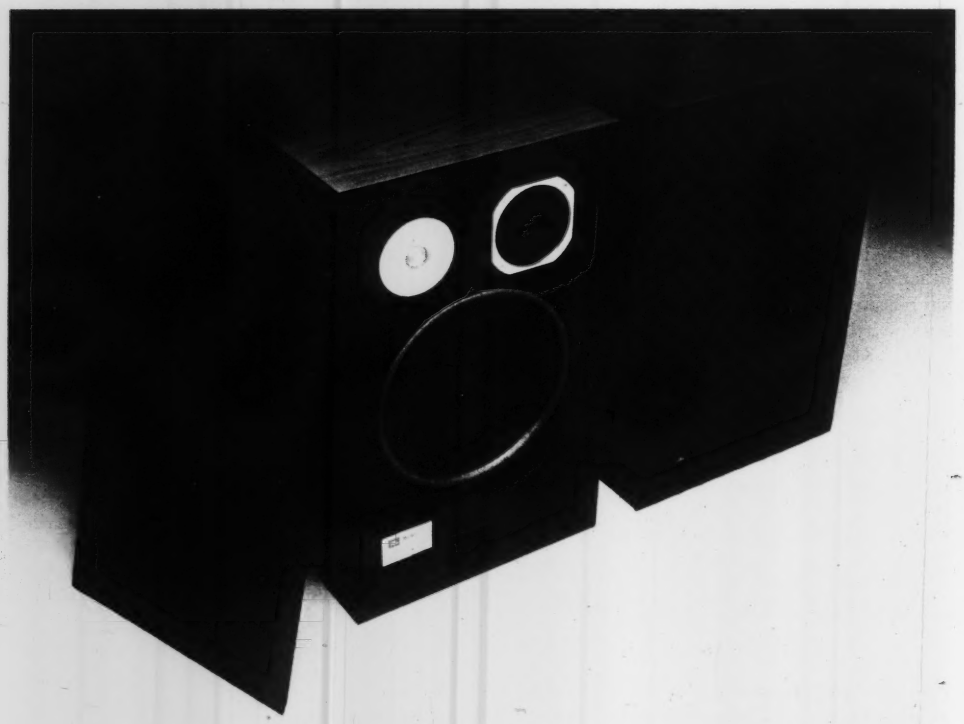

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of hit men dispatched from Havana. Mrs. Luce's story checked out. There was indeed a boat, and one of the men who manned it was a prominent exile adventurer in Miami. There was no way, however, to prove his story. The same was also true of a story that had come to the attention of the Warren Commission 12 years before, this one told by a Cuban woman active in exile politics in Dallas. She told of meeting Oswald and two other men not long before the assassination. They had come to seek her aid in some unspecified plot, though Oswald was quoted as saying how easy it would be to kill the President. The Warren Commission, which publicly wrote off the story, was privately bothered by it, and never succeeded in explaining what seemed to be proof of a plot. Schweiker, too, was bothered. The woman was tracked down and reinterviewed. The investigators came away impressed with her credibility as a witness. She was utterly certain that the man she had met in Dallas was Oswald. Who were the other men? That was a mystery. And so there the trail ended.

On the surface, there was reason to suspect that Castro may have had something to do with the assassination. The United States, after all, was doing its best to get rid of him during the Kennedy Administration, with or without the President's permission. Indeed, five days before the assassination, Castro delivered a speech, saying that he knew of the assassination attempts against him and warning that assassinations could work both ways. At the time, few people took him seriously. Certainly, the Warren Commission, which knew nothing of the CIA's assassination plots, did not put any stock in Castro's allegations. Not until three years after the Commission completed its work, according to a report made available to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Operations and thus to Schweiker, was Warren told by the Secret Service of the assassination plots. By then, it was too late to do anything about it.

It was apparently that report which prompted Hank Greenspun, the publisher of the *Las Vegas Sun*, to write a recent copyrighted article alleging that Castro was behind the assassination not only of the President but probably of Robert Kennedy, too. What made the story suspicious—and easily discounted by the investigators—was Greenspun's close ties with Robert Maheu, the former boss of Howard Hughes' Nevada empire and the man who assembled the team of Mafia hit men to kill Castro.

What impressed the investigators more was the opposite possibility: that Oswald might have been an anti-Castro agent. Their curiosity was piqued by William C. Gaudet, a man who had stood in line immediately ahead of Oswald the day he received a travel permit to go to Mexico, where Oswald hoped to obtain a visa for travel to Cuba. Gaudet's name had originally been censored from the list of names, and for good reason. For, by his own admission, he had been an employee of the Central Intelligence Agency. He also knew of Oswald and his alleged pro-Castro activities, which, in one interview, he branded as "nothing but a front." That was Gaudet's opinion. It was shared by some of the investigators. The problem, as always, was proof. Schweiker could not find it.

WIDE WORLD

Senator Richard Schweiker announcing his JFK assassination probe last September.

So much was suspicious. Fair Play for Cuba itself was a puzzle, especially after investigators discovered that another one of its leading members had a background remarkably similar to Oswald's: Russian-speaker, Texas resident, supposed leftist convert who, in fact, had served in Air Force intelligence and, like Oswald, had crypto-clearance. There was one more interesting fact: in November 1963, he was in Havana, Cuba. What did it mean? Who knew.

Like an image now in focus, now out, everything seemed just beyond reach.

Schweiker came across many odd and troubling coincidences, as critics of the Warren Commission have been doing for years. What he was looking for, he says, was something more: "One startling revelation so incredible that there would have to be a new investigation." He never found it. But, then, few people expected him to. Those who know the Kennedy case best, who have been working with it and tormented by it for years, long ago concluded that they would never find a smoking gun, that one piece of incontrovertible evidence that would finally shake the Warren Report down. The case does not work that way. It is a puzzle, an intricate mosaic of small, seemingly insignificant bits of odd detail which, when fitted together, form an image only half-complete. The rest would never be found in the National Archives, or the files of the FBI or CIA. It would take the national will to ferret them out. And, after 12 years, it is the will that is lacking.

There will be more attempts. Two House resolutions seeking a new investigation have collected more than 125 co-sponsors. The final Church Committee report may stir enough interest to bring a new Senate probe. But Richard Schweiker has had his day. He does not look confident anymore. In fact, he seems drained, physically exhausted. The mail, which once ran heavily in his favor, has turned against him, as it has turned against the entire investigation of the CIA. These days there are only explanations. "He is a very direct, honest guy," one of Schweiker's friends says of him. "He thinks that if you are direct and honest, you can find the truth. Maybe he's naive. Maybe we all are." ●

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Murder on the bayou

By Wayne Slater

When a pistol-popping, club-swinging horde assaulted a construction site and killed a man, it looked like a union revolt against scab workers. But something more important was at stake—the power structure of a Louisiana parish

Just forget about those hulking backwater assassins. Forget about those grawfaced old boys and their contrary looks and their .44 Magnums and their days spent drinking Jax beer up at Lou Ann's Lounge. Forget about the whole friggin' Bayou Brand work boot crowd. Just ease back and turn up the car radio and listen to Willie Nelson singing his mournful heartbreak blues. And goodmighty Lord! Would you look at those morning fogs lifting off the swamps of Calcasieu Parish, rising off like ghosts, revealing miles and miles of . . . *pure eternal Cajun vastitude.* . . . Just sedge and saltwater drifts and some of the most wild-ass crawdad back country in the Sovereign State of Louisiana.

How perfect! How absolutely right that Willie is singing his sad songs of love and death out here in the middle of this godforsaken wilderness. It was, after all, just up ahead, up there somewhere on the west bank of the Calcasieu River, that exactly one week ago they blew Joe Hooper away.

It wasn't really Joe they were after. He just sort of got in the way. It was the company men who were the targets, the slick pinstripe lawyers and the moneymen and the supervisors who gathered each morning at 7:00 o'clock sharp in a blue and white aluminum house trailer on the construction site of the Jupiter Chemical Company's new ammonia plant at Lake Charles, Louisiana. They wanted the company wheels of this operation, and so it was ironic that when a hundred madeyed union men stormed the gates on January 15, the only person to die was Joe Hooper, a high-school dropout who had drifted from gas station to garage before hiring on one day earlier.

Joe was a member of Local 102, American Federation of Unions, an independent union out of Baton Rouge. And that, simply, was the problem. The hardcore AFL-CIO types around southwestern Louisiana don't think very much of Local 102, whose members don't get paid as much and don't get the same benefits and, therefore, can be hired by a contractor at a cut-rate price. Local 102 is a multicraft union, which is tantamount to saying it's not a union at all, at least in the minds of the AFL-CIO members who are all divided up into exclusive crafts like pipefitters and bricklayers and electrical workers. So when Jupiter Chemical brought in the Local 102 boys on January 14, all the AFL-CIO workers walked off the job. By 7:15 the next morning, the whole place looked like a battlefield with trailers ripped open and cars overturned and ambulances racing around to carry away the wounded and Joe Hooper sprawled across the linoleum of the main office trailer with a .9 caliber slug in his heart.

"The unions run everything," says Bolton Richmond, a plant security guard. "They own everybody and everything around here."

Organized labor, especially in construction, is the big political and economic power in the bayou country. And the temple of that power is the Southwest Louisiana Building and Construction Trades Council, which represents AFL-CIO locals in Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Beauregard, Vernon and Allen parishes. The parish, a geographical unit similar to a county, is a curious vestige of Louisiana's Napoleonic law and tradition, and it is at that level that the thugs and ward heelers hold sway.

About a year ago, Donald Lovett rose from the ranks to take over the council. Lovett, a short, swarthy pipefitter with a full head of brown hair and a streetfighter's face, has a long arrest record with charges ranging from aggravated assault and battery to having carnal knowledge of a juvenile. It is an old rule around Calcasieu Parish that when Lovett and the boys go out drinking and generally raising hell, it's best to stay out of the way.

Lovett refused to discuss the January 15 incident. But in a prepared statement issued by his office within

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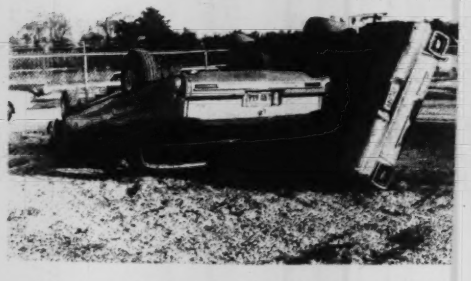
Wayne Slater, a reporter for the Associated Press, last wrote for NEW TIMES *on a wildcat strike in the West Virginia coalfields.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER FARQUE



THE AMERICAN PRESS/LAKE CHARLES, LA.

Why was the construction site ravaged? Local union chieftain Donald Lovett (bottom right) says he knows nothing about it, but a grand jury thought otherwise.

hours after the murder, Lovett said: "We, the labor leaders of Southwest Louisiana, were shocked and dismayed by the violence that occurred this morning at the Jupiter Chemical site. We do not condone violence in any form. We are sure that when this incident is fully investigated, the law enforcement agencies will find that professional strikebreakers were used."

All of which was absolutely absurd, of course, and everybody knew it. But Lovett was working hard to create the notion that the Lake Charles labor violence was just another company-union squabble. Actually, it wasn't even a fight between unions, which a lot of people seemed to believe. Sure, there's a battle going on between big unions and independent unions, but there is also something else, something far more pervasive and insidious.

What you've got in Calcasieu Parish is a strange alliance, a power structure made up of construction union thugs, select contractors, local politicians, moneymen and law enforcement officials, and everybody is working to preserve the status quo. Everybody wants to keep the insiders on top and the outsiders out. No rogue unions, no recalcitrant contractors, no companies that won't play by the rules. Members only, please. A flat out backwater oligarchy!

And who would have ever thought it, that a half-century after Samuel Gompers' death the traditional power relationships would begin to waver and fall, and that in southwestern Louisiana the real struggle wouldn't be between the union and company anymore, or even between individual unions—the real action would be a breakneck honky-tonk brawl between the outsiders and *L'Alliance*.

"You know you've got trouble in the morning," a voice informed Bolton Richmond on the phone. But the voice wouldn't say who he was or exactly what had been planned. The security guard hung up and walked over to the window of the office trailer and looked out into the pitch black gloom. A ghostly silence had settled over the Jupiter Chemical Company construction site.

There was probably some kind of meeting, Bolton figured, probably some kind of meeting in every swampwater bar from Lake Charles to the gulf. And at every one there were probably a few boys hollering about how somebody ought to teach the scabs up at Jupiter Chemical a thing or two. Only what usually happens is that they get so rocking-horse drunk that they stagger home and fall into bed and forget it. There was no way Bolton could know that this night was different. There was no way he could know that a select few had met and decided not to rough up the Local 102 boys, but to blitz the office trailers at daybreak in a sudden, violent attack and to kill everybody inside.

There was no picket line the next morning when Joe Hooper arrived, so he walked right through the gate and over to one of the company trailers, where he still had to sign some papers. Just one other worker was in the trailer, along with the company men running over the day's work. Mike Pharis, an attorney for Payne & Keller, the contractor, was looking out the window, a bit concerned about a small gathering of men across the blacktop road.

Pharis watched as two state police cruisers, one coming from each direction, crisscrossed in front of the plant site. One of the troopers stopped and told the driver of a suspiciously stalled camper to quit blocking traffic. A real crowd had formed out front, maybe 100 men in all, but the trooper climbed back into his cruiser, reported that the road was clear and drove away.

Down at the end of Pete Manena Road, some old boy had climbed aboard one of those hulking yellow Hy-Stacker forklifts and was hauling ass down the road toward Jupiter Chemical. As the lift pulled directly in front of the plant, it made a sudden left turn and began rolling full-bore through the gate. Instantly, as if on cue, everybody started streaming across Pete Manena Road behind the forklift. Suddenly there were people everywhere, shouting and jerking clubs from their jackets. There were people hanging off the forklift, firing shotguns, automatic carbines, .25 caliber pistols, .357 Magnums, every conceivable weapon, blasting their way across the site like some frenzied military assault.

The monster forklift rammed the guardhouse and turned it over, then wheeled around and headed straight for the office trailers. Pharis grabbed a telephone to call for help, but there was no dial tone, nothing, just flat eerie silence. They had cut the lines.

"Lock the doors and get down," Pharis yelled. Everybody dove for the floor just as the lift slammed through the far end of the trailer with a tremendous

rocking collision. Bullets were exploding through the walls.

"My God," said Joe Hooper, looking down at the raw twisted aluminum and fiberglass. "My God. What is this?"

Everybody huddled against the ersatz pine walls trying to avoid the bullets. The men outside were destroying cars with their hand axes and clubs. The forklift roared its diesel engine. Suddenly, in the middle of everything, Joe Hooper was screaming.

"They're shooting me! They're shooting me!" he screamed, clutching at his chest. His workshirt was soaked with blood. He twisted frantically as if searching for his assassin. "They're shooting me!"

Then he collapsed and rolled over on his back and lay there silently for a long time, just staring straight ahead without blinking, staring with a bewildered intensity at the splintered bullet holes in the walls and the cockeyed way daylight was streaming through. Joe Hooper died before the ambulances came.

Labor violence is nothing new around southwestern Louisiana. When 4,000 Texas longshoremen went on strike in 1934 and about 120 Louisiana longshoremen decided they would just keep working, well, the next thing you knew a gang of the meanest, most contrary working men this side of Amarillo descended on downtown Lake Charles like a Wild West show gone amok, firing into store fronts, ravaging Franklin Street beer halls, accosting Cajun women and otherwise trying to impress upon those thick-witted old Loozyana boys that when *some* of the dock workers go on strike, *all* of the dock workers go on strike.

As oil production increased through the 1930s and 1940s, a whole petrochemical industry sprang up along the gulf. People from Natchitoches and De Ridder and Sugartown traveled south to take jobs in the refineries and chemical plants. In the beginning, during the early boom years, the workers were often exploited by the New Orleans and Houston moneymen who were running the show. But the unions did a lot to change that. The unions got the men a decent paycheck and helped fight their grievances and improved their job benefits. And somewhere along the line the unions emerged as the dominant power in the region. Management could not begin to compete with the organization and political clout and economic concentration of the unions, at least not in a predominately rural boom area such as southwestern Louisiana.

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But then something happened—a recession. The building trades were hit hardest of all. Suddenly you had thousands of construction workers searching for jobs and union bosses becoming very hard-nosed on the matter of nonunion labor. The big cities felt it first. In Philadelphia, for example, a rogue contractor named J. Leon Altemose had for years been avoiding the cities, where the strongest craft unions are located, and building in the suburbs with nonunion laborers. In the early 1970s, when downtown construction began dropping off, the unions looked to the suburbs for work. The bosses tried to force Altemose to hire all his workers from downtown union halls. He refused. As a result, in early summer 1973, a very angry mob ravaged his construction site near Valley Forge.

It was much the same in southwestern Louisiana. Billions of dollars in construction projects have already been postponed and unemployment is running high. But it wasn't just organized labor that was threatened in Calcasieu Parish; it was *L'Alliance* as well, that invisible, cozy network of elected officials who keep getting elected, contractors who keep getting contracts and unions that keep getting jobs. Last May, when a firm brought in some nonunion construction workers to build the Ellender Bridge, a mob swinging clubs and lug wrenches attacked the site, sending three persons to the hospital. The company complained of "lack of cooperation" from local authorities; there were no arrests. Three months later, a dredging company fighting illegal pickets complained that law enforcement officials "were repeatedly informed of unlawful conduct and hazards to safety and have failed and refused to respond."

It's not that *L'Alliance* supersedes the law, exactly, but it's often hard to tell the two apart. When Frank Salter ran for reelection as D.A., nobody thought much about the fact that union leader Donald Lovett was campaigning for him. Lovett was backing a sure winner, the aging Democratic machine candidate who had shown since 1960 that he knew what the working men of Calcasieu Parish wanted from their D.A.'s office. So when the people would see Salter riding around with Lovett in a sleek black Eldorado, well, nobody really thought much about it.

The curious thing is that, along with his union connections, Salter has very close ties to a number of contracting companies, privately representing several of them in court. Salter gets rather angry when you mention it, but he also owns a piece of one of those companies, Odell Vinson & Assoc., Inc.; in fact, the Lake Charles city directory lists Salter as vice-president. Last year, Vinson Construction bid on—and lost—a contract to do part of the work at Jupiter Chemical. The president of Jupiter, Arizona businessman Robert Kerley, hired first one contractor and then, complaining about union featherbedding and jurisdictional disputes, he brought in Payne & Keller and Local 102 in early January.

According to a New Orleans newspaper, Kerley was approached to pay $30,000 protection money in return for assured labor peace. The money reportedly was never paid, and on January 15, just as the morning fogs were lifting off the Calcasieu swamps, 100 mad-eyed union men stormed the gates of Jupiter Chemical. Joe Hooper was killed.

In connection with the murder of Joe Hooper and the assault on Jupiter Chemical, a Calcasieu Parish grand jury indicted 14 persons, including Donald Lovett, who is charged with manslaughter and conspiracy, and another middle-level union official. The indictments came after the state attorney general's office entered the probe directed by Frank Salter. A federal grand jury, meanwhile, has begun meeting in Lake Charles and is reportedly looking into broader questions, such as Salter's relationship with Vinson Construction, the alleged $30,000 extortion attempt, the extent of planning that went into the January 15 assault and other possible violations of federal anti-racketeering laws.

The bull-necked thug raises the gun barrel straight at the reporter's head. "You've been asking all the wrong questions. It's time you went back to wherever it is you're from. Got it?"

"Listen," this old guy in a wool plaid shirt-jak is saying. "A majority of these working men didn't support the killing. Most of these men wouldn't do this."

Shirt-Jak has come out of nowhere to say this—out of the black petrochemical night. He has the urgent look of a man who's afraid the real story won't be told here and so he's followed this reporter and has him cornered in a parking lot out back of the Cajun Kitchen, and he is explaining in great detail how a majority of the union boys in southwestern Louisiana aren't really murderers and goons.

"It's just that there's this low-life group, you understand? Any time you get this many crafts together and the men have been out drinkin', you're gonna have a few hotheads and, well, you're going to have something like this here. Nobody wanted to kill the Hooper boy. It was. . . ." And it's like Shirt-Jak isn't sure himself exactly what happened. He just stands there for a moment shaking his head. "It was just a few who done it. The crud done it."

Yes! The crud! That slimy backwater group *over there.* Here is some old pipefitter or asbestos worker or something, some workaday laborer with 20 years in the Calcasieu mud, and he's talking about the labor violence as if it were a phenomenon *apart* from the workers themselves. *And he is right!* The thugs who planned the assault on Jupiter Chemical weren't storm troopers of organized labor. They had union cards, all right, but they didn't represent the vast majority of AFL-CIO working men with families and kids and 12-foot midnight blue Swampcats docked out on the bayou.

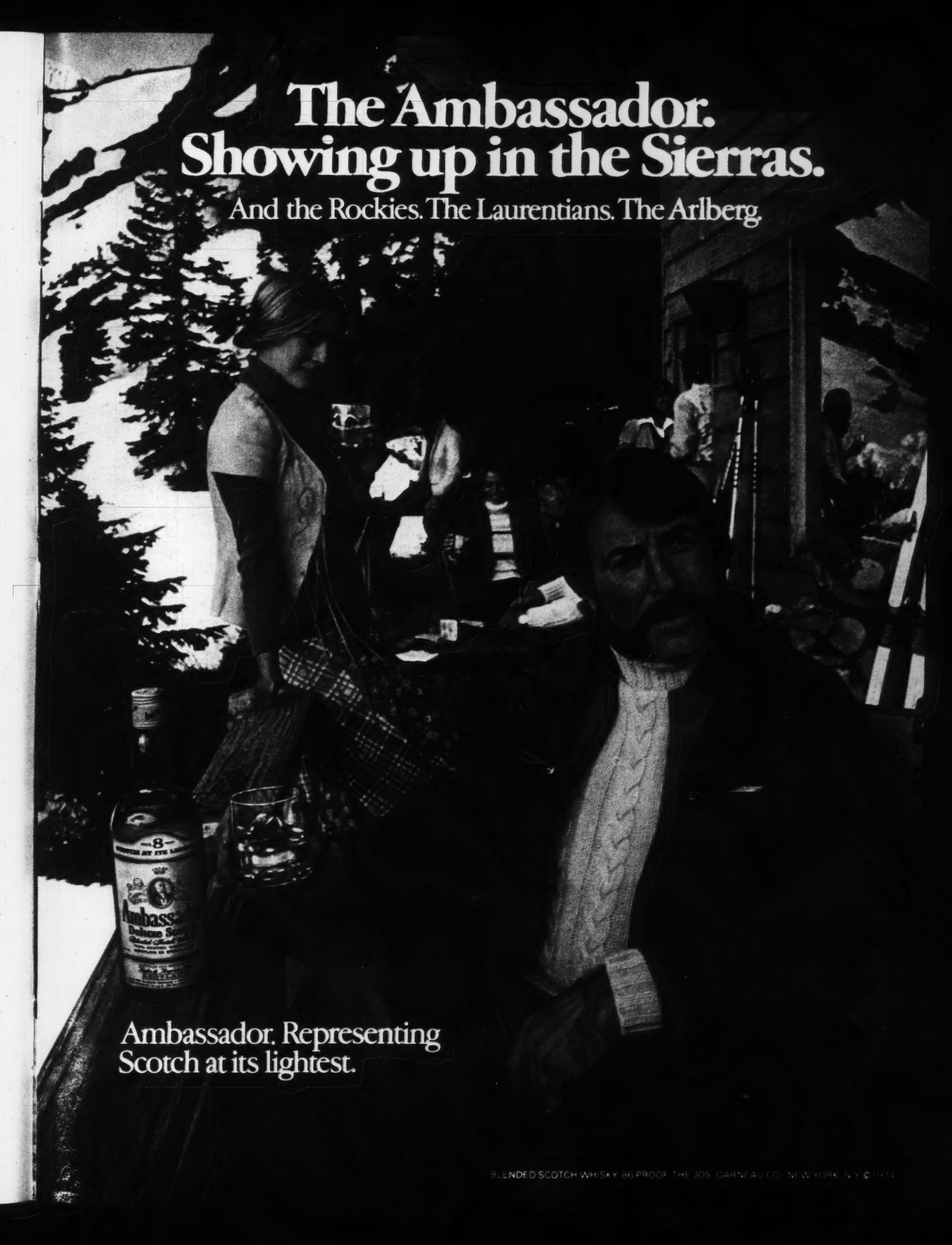
Shirt-Jak starts to say something else, but he stops when a Chevy pickup pulls in next to him. It's clear that Shirt-Jak wasn't the only one following the reporter tonight. Sitting in the cab, looking over at the reporter with absolute undisguised contempt, is the meanest, most grizzled, bull-necked thug on the whole Louisiana Gulf Coast.

"Hey there, boy," he says. "Come 'ere." Slowly at first, he bends those broad enormous lips into a grin, an enormous mother stretching all the way across his face like the grille of a 1947 Pontiac or something. It is a hideous grin, a grotesque grin . . . the grin of a man who has his finger on the trigger of a .44 Magnum, which is exactly what appears to be glittering there at the edge of the window.

"Look, you've been around here long enough. It's time you went back to wherever it is you're from. Got it? This ain't your kind of town." Big Grin sort of laughs at that line, and then he raises the gun barrel straight at the reporter's head. "You've been asking all the wrong questions. Things are going fine here and everything will be okay as long as you just mind your own business.

"This ain't New York," he says. "This here is Louisiana." And suddenly it's all so clear. The men who planned the Jupiter assault are an elite guard, protectors of the status quo, of the oligarchy, of the comfortable insiders. They are the gunsels of *L'Alliance.*

"You've got five minutes," says Big Grin. "And I'm not kidding. If I see your ass again, you're a dead man." ●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THE FÜHRER OVER est

Werner Erhard, the Duddy Kravitz of the human potential movement, is the quintessential graduate of his own training. Before you join the swelling est ranks, take a close look at the master himself

By Jesse Kornbluth

In March 1972, five months after Erhard Seminars Training was founded in San Francisco, Werner Erhard decided it was time to expand what he likes to call "the est universe." Eve Bruce, Erhard's Los Angeles companion, was dispatched to organize a lunch at the Polo Lounge and a "special event" a few weeks later. The guests, Erhard emphasized, were not to be chosen randomly. He wanted celebrities only.

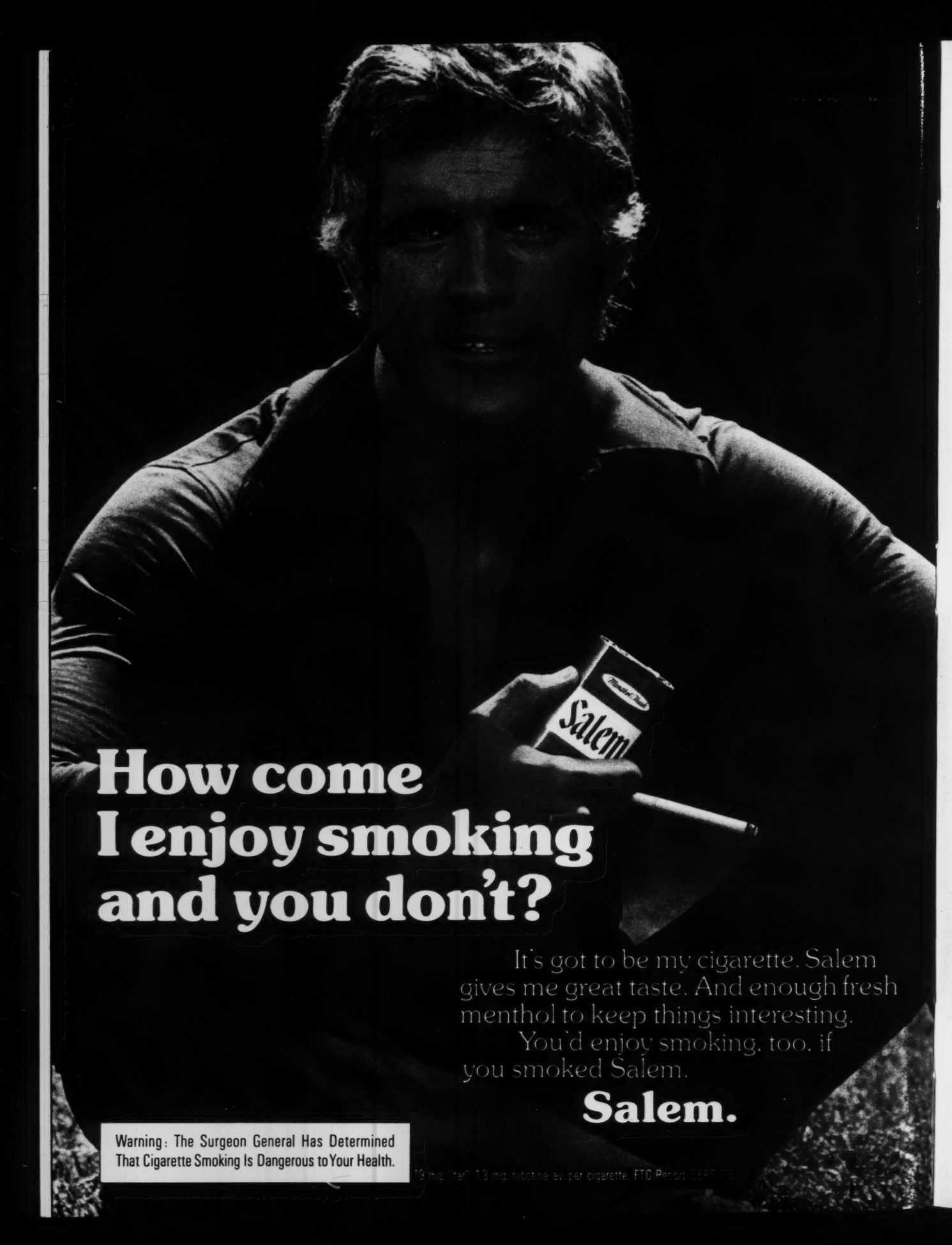
At the Polo Lounge, Werner Erhard found himself breaking bread with Ann Miller, Glenn Ford, Jess Stearn and Susan Strasberg. The lunch, Stearn recalls, was "not memorable." The Beverly Hills event was also a washout. The stars just didn't understand the appeal of a weekend spent in a sealed hotel ballroom. "They really weren't ready for it," Eve Bruce concluded.

By 1975, they were ready. In fact, they were rabid about est. Not on the East Coast, where self-help is still considered merely a West Coast indulgence. But in California, est's home territory, Werner Erhard has become the most successful Pied Piper since Tim Leary. And like that prophet of LSD, Werner Erhard thinks his product is good enough, important enough—and, God knows, salable enough—to be installed, quite permanently, in every American home and head. Already, without much critical attention, the est phenomenon is considered a hot topic of conversation at the dinner parties of our movers and shakers, and the est training is becoming a popular singles bar without drinks for lonely veterans of 1960s hipness and for others who don't dare miss the latest in self-help therapies. That audience, however, isn't grand enough for Werner Erhard. Not for him a quick consignment to the where-are-they-now graveyard—if Werner Erhard has his way, est will become the most successful American institution ever to have been dismissed as "just another California trip." And because Werner Erhard has been getting his way with astounding regularity, he seems to have decided that 1976 will be the year for est to capture a mass audience.

Est will be coming to your neighborhood with blue-ribbon recommendations. Cloris Leachman, Valerie Harper, Cher, Jeff Bridges, John Denver, Buzz Aldrin, Marion Javits, Jerry Rubin, John Dean and so many executives at one film studio that Hollywood wits dubbed it "Werner Brothers" have been happy to "acknowledge" the contribution est has made to their "aliveness." Werner Erhard, through est, has created the "space" for them to "be" and given them the "opportunity" to "take responsibility" for their lives. Seventy thousand others, less famous but nonetheless allegedly equal in Erhard's affections, have also paid the $250 training fee and "graduated" from est. And, according to est, 8,000 more are waiting for their chance.

The "training" is only the beginning; est encourages "participation" as a way of life. There are 3,500 est graduates currently volunteering—sometimes as much as 40 hours a week—as "assistants" in their local est offices. Forty percent of its graduates who live within 80 miles of the dozen cities where the training is offered are enrolled in the est seminar series. Recently, est has created programs for all but the certifiably insane: there are special sessions for children, teenagers, college students, blacks and prisoners. As a result, Erhard Seminars Training projects a gross of $1 million a month and expects to open offices in 12 more cities

PHOTOGRAPH BY SANDY SOLMON HAND COLORING BY STEVE PHILLIPS


Salem
How come
I enjoy smoking
and you don't?
It's got to be my cigarette. Salem
gives me great taste. And enough fresh
menthol to keep things interesting.
You'd enjoy smoking, too, if
you smoked Salem.
Salem.
Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

in the next year. "The growth of est," writes the manager of est's Command Division, "is limited only by the availability of personnel to conduct the educational program." Clearly, this is no ordinary tent show.

What est is and does has remained remarkably mysterious. This is no accident. Werner Erhard prefers that est graduates and writers not analyze his 50-70 hour training too closely. As his younger brother advised a group of trainees not long ago, "What to do in talking about est to friends. . . is not to tell them about the training. I know that sounds crazy, but *don't* tell them about the training. Tell them your *experience* of it, but if you try to tell them what it's *about,* they get annoyed or confused, they look at you with frustration perhaps. What I've found works is just to give the details. How long it is, what it costs and that's it." If the uninitiated want to know more, the place to find out is an est "guest seminar"—or better, in the training itself.

So all the designers of est would like me to say is that est is a two-weekend training program that takes its $250 from 250 people at a clip. Each Saturday and Sunday, you enter a hotel ballroom around 9:00 in the morning, and, with the exception of two widely spaced bathroom breaks, you remain there "until the results for that day are produced"—usually until after midnight. You agree to wear name tags. You agree not to take drugs unless your doctor insists. You agree not to drink alcohol during your training period. And you agree that you have "created" these agreements.

The training itself consists of interminable lectures—"What is the ground of being from which agreement occurs? From which does it spring? Where does it come from? In other words, what is so *so* for you about reality that you can't even tell what's so for you?"—by the 40-year-old Erhard or one of his nine equally airbrushed, male-model-type trainers (a woman has recently been added to the corps). There are several "processes," which are like mental exercises. There is also "sharing," which is what you do when you have something to communicate. And then there are insults; along the way, the trainees are routinely called "turkeys," "suckers" and, most commonly, "assholes."

The ideal est article would end at this point, but Werner—he likes everyone to use only his first name—understands that editors can't run thousand-word advertisements as articles, so he generously gives journalists the "space" to write more expansively. About the training, that is. Other kinds of writing about est are aggressively discouraged, and est has instituted a comprehensive series of procedures to dissuade journalists from trying to investigate Erhard or his organization.

These elaborate precautions against media penetration of est begin with est's employees. In the confidential "Staff Responsibilities" memo, est personnel are given explicit instructions on the art of media deflection: "Thank the person for their [sic] interest and refer them to est's Public Relations Agency. . . .Then call the Public Information Office at est Central as soon as possible. It is imperative that all media information be divulged immediately." At this point, everything is under control; the Public Information Officer at est Central is unflappable. She should be—according to *San Francisco* magazine, she has been sent to school to learn how to give interviews without saying anything significant.

Est does not yet have a staff cafeteria, and that gives the corporate high-ups cause for concern. What if a reporter wandered into a restaurant near est's unpretentiously modern San Francisco headquarters and overheard est

Est employees work like warriors. "The Germans," Erhard liked to tell his San Francisco staff, "are in Oakland"

staffers discussing business over lunch? So another decree was passed down—when est employees are out of the office, they are to "avoid use of words that carry a lot of power and attention in their use: 'Werner,' 'est,' 'fuck.' " Similarly, they are not to do est paperwork outside the office. Even in talking with their friends, their conversations are censored: "When communicating with people about the organization, share your experience of working with est and being a graduate and the value you have received from having taken the training."

But because there is so much about est that Werner Erhard wants to keep secret, he's had to carry his campaign against the media a few steps further. Compulsory "Notes to Werner" are written by staff members every other month, enabling Erhard to spot potential dissidents. On two sides of a single page, staffers are to answer seven questions, including: "If there's anything you're not saying, say it." "If there's anything you don't want to say, say that." "Tell me if I can count on you to get the job done." That, however, hasn't satisfied Erhard's passion for loyalty. Recently, all est staff members were required to confess: "As part of est, who do you resent?"

Apparently, some staff complaints—in est jargon, they're called "upsets"—are so extraordinary that supersecrecy is required. According to est directives, an extremely agitated staffer is to prepare a report about his problem, make no copies, seal it in an envelope, mark it "confidential" and send it to "est attorney, Command Division." This, says the Staff Responsibilities memo, "makes the report a safe, privileged communication which cannot legally be brought to light. You do not need to do anything else." Internally, at least, est believes it has plugged all leaks.

Outside the immediate est universe, however, there are a number of people whose information about Erhard and his organizational setup might be used to derail est. For them, other tactics were devised. Late in December, Erhard decided that a letter—the second in a series—should be sent to his relatives, Advisory Board members, friends of est and ex-staff members. The purpose was to "flatten" their potential to embarrass est in the media—although est, of course, made it seem that Erhard merely wanted to help them defend themselves against a continued assault from the press. Vice-President Tony Freedley assigned the writing of this letter to the est Projects Group. "This is an urgent matter and should be handled with a high priority status," he told them. "Werner's words regarding this were 'very quickly.' " The letter, he continued, was to show people who are now "targets" for media attention "the ridiculous lengths the media can go to" and "to expose the intent of the investigative media." Freedley understood that the letter could not overtly demand silence from est's friends. "Obviously," he instructed the Projects Group, "we can't tell anyone what to do and we would not want to do so." A subtler way of encouraging the recipients to cooperate was developed: a follow-up phone call from the est office "to answer any questions or provide any information." And the tone of the letter, Freedley emphasized, should also "create some alarm for the recipients to be careful."

Careful—but of what?

For an organization that professes to despise the methods of investigative journalism, est certainly has a paradoxical way of conducting its own investigations. In the fall of 1975, a private detective was hired to pose as a reporter and "interview" at least one of the sources for this article. This operative, David Fech-

heimer, turns out to be the partner of Hal Lipset, the nationally known San Francisco detective who once amazed a Senate subcommittee by demonstrating the use of a martini olive as a bugging device and who, more recently, served with chilling distinction as the technical adviser on Francis Ford Coppola's ultra-paranoid film, *The Conversation.* So whatever it is that est seems determined to protect, the logical conclusion is that it's potentially more explosive than the est mailing list or the "big secret" of the est training.

Whether they're willing to play by est's rules or not, writers will find that Werner Erhard is extremely interested in the final stages of their work. Although he can't sit still long enough to have his picture taken—he's so busy he's had to institute a photo library, which will provide any graphics you like free of charge—he can make time to read your article, particularly while it's still in manuscript. This unique editorial service—also on the house, of course—is, insists est President Don Cox, not intended to abridge anyone's First Amendment freedoms. Est simply wants the writer to have "the benefit of our input to correct any inaccuracies that may be present."

The effect of all this choreography is that when a writer sits down to run some pages about est through his typewriter, all he has to write about is—the training! And Werner Erhard is thrilled! Even when journalists roast est or call it brainwashing or forget that the corporate name is always to be lower-cased, Werner Erhard loves it. Because this is exactly how he's set it up: having first created so much mystery about the est product, he knows that even the most hostile criticism only sparks more curiosity and drives thousands of new marks into the est way of life.

And, according to the est gospel, Werner Erhard "knows" something else: all criticism is self-created—what used to be called "projection"—and thus says more about the critic than it does about his subject. "My job," Erhard explains, "is really to know that *you* created est. I'm supposed to hang around and be clear that you created est and est belongs to you." If you perceive anything awry with the est organization, it somehow becomes *your* responsibility to correct the problem. Similarly, it's *your* misconception if you notice that the est vocabulary is so ambiguous it can be used as a tool of liberation in the training and as a mechanism for control within the organization. And, of course, it's not Erhard's problem if people are so insecure that they flock to his trainings; that's a "barrier" to self-confidence they'll just have to "experience out." Est just provides the opportunity for folks to find out where they're at. It's a good concept: a few hundred bucks paid over to Erhard & Company and they save thousands that would have otherwise gone to the analyst. And they bless him—to the tune of $62,500 each training.

So est has become the *Jaws* of the human potential game, eating everything in sight, swallowing people who seem never to have dabbled in any of the other self-help playpens. Are they being conned? Of course not! Why, they were *never* fooled by Nixon. They're *educated.* They'd never fall for any ordinary swami. And they're absolutely right! Werner Erhard is no giggling Maharishi, no inarticulate Rev. Moon. He's a Park Avenue illusionist, a master of marketing and propaganda, a very American invention—Swami Uptown!

Not, of course, according to Erhard. "My plans," he proclaimed, in one of his increasingly rare encounters with an interviewer, "could be said to be to make est as public as possible. My notion on how to do that is through the educational system. So I would like to give est up to the environment." Privately, though, Erhard speaks as though he'd prefer the environment to give itself up to est. "If the Buddha could reach 40 million people without television," he has told his staff, "then we can certainly get 40 million." But what would Erhard have these followers do? On that subject, he is absolutely benign. "I want to leave behind a single monument—a world that works," he swears. "I don't want anyone to remember I had anything to do with it." That, he explains, is why he created est in the first place: to make available a training that "serves people." "The purpose of est," Erhard always says, "is to transform your ability to experience living so that the situations you have been trying to change or have been putting up with clear up just in the process of life itself."

A Sausalito security officer recalls: "He threatened to kill me.... He said, 'I'm gonna throw you over the railing'"

Perhaps, if by "est" he means the est training. But est as an *organization* seems to have other purposes, and they seem to be the variety that can best be realized in the absence of public scrutiny. Yes, these purposes include "serving people"—it's just that the people who get served are Werner Erhard, his lawyers and the upper-echelon est staff.

The first of these purposes seems to be to provide a springboard for the career of est's self-proclaimed Mr. Anonymous, Werner Erhard. The second purpose of the est organization seems to be the substitution of "service" for "salary" in the minds of hundreds of thousands of people and the creation of the most ingenious and legal pyramid scheme in the human potential movement. The third purpose of est seems to be to shelter money in offshore banks as insurance against a time when Werner Erhard might find it more convenient to reside outside the United States.

But the most immediate purpose of est is to protect the ever-mushrooming popularity of its standard-bearer, Werner Erhard. Est has urgent problems on other fronts—its lawyer is under federal indictment; the dropout rate in its training, in some cities, is up 60 percent; the est staff is, by a senior member's assessment, "no longer personable to the point of insult"—but none of these unpublicized difficulties seems to occupy as much time and commitment as Erhard's media war. Now est must deny all experience that does not mesh with its propaganda. Now est must impugn the motivation of anyone whose knowledge of Erhard or his organization differs from the official est biography.

This is more than blind narcissism. For Werner Erhard has made one mistake too large for mere correction—he has needlessly connected the success of his multi-million dollar organization to his own "integrity." Any chink in his story, any forced deviation from est's grand scheme, and his empire might be leveled like a Taj Mahal built of playing cards. And now that he has become the inevitable focus of any "unauthorized" writing about est, Werner Erhard is facing a problem that, as he would say, he alone has "created." It is the one problem more potentially damaging than Erhard's inability to keep the est master plan forever under wraps.

That problem is with the people outside est who know about Erhard's past and how est operates—specifically, that they might all come out of the woodwork at once.

Werner Erhard begins his official est biography with one of his classic bits of doublespeak: "Some people think est came into being because of my past. Ac-

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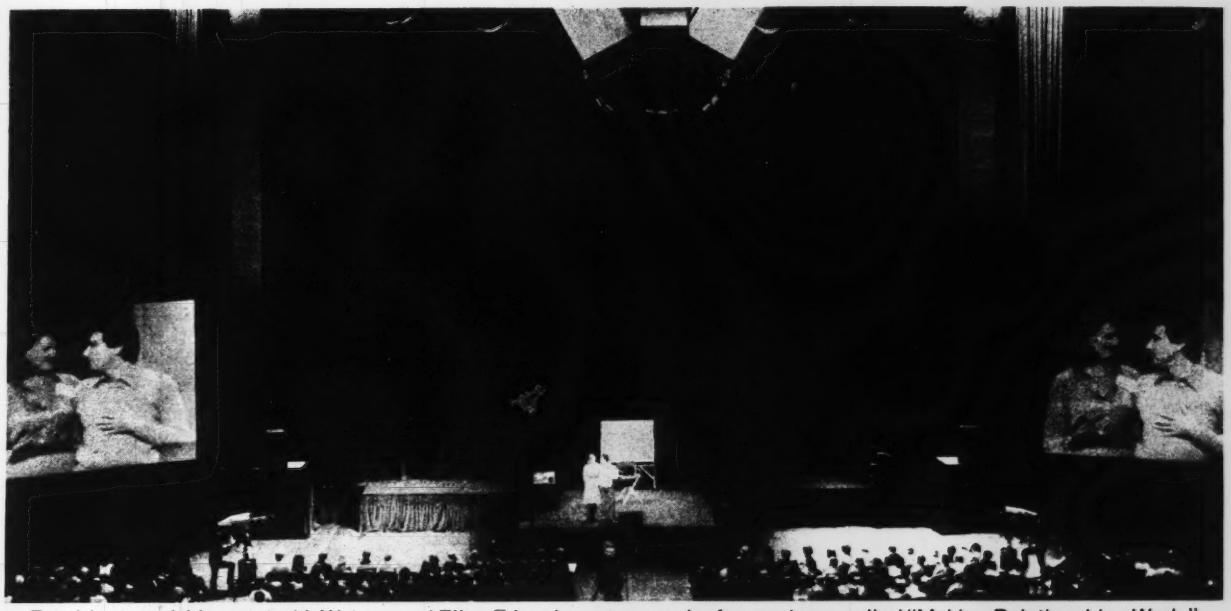

Est videotaped this event with Werner and Ellen Erhard as an exemplar for seminars called "Making Relationships Work."

tually, est came into being because I completed my past. . . . Having confronted it, taken responsibility for it, communicated, and corrected it, it is now completed for me." In a letter cautioning this writer to suspect the accuracy of information that might discredit Erhard—and announcing est's policy of making writers and publishers "generally and legally responsible for inaccuracies, misrepresentations and reckless disregard for the truth"—est President Cox thoughtfully translates Erhard's jargon for us. "There is nothing relevant in Werner's background which he hasn't already publicly acknowledged and nothing he needs to hide," writes Cox. But Werner Erhard's past isn't near completion for those est staffers who are periodically forced to update his recollections as new revelations surface in the media. And Werner Erhard's past certainly has not been "completed" for Bill Thaw.

Looking back on their friendship, Bill Thaw recalls it was only by chance that he learned "Jack Frost" was really John Paul Rosenberg, the son of a Philadelphia restaurant owner who saved his son from the stigma of Jewish birth by converting to the Episcopal Church. This deception did not distress Thaw; in fact, he thought it was one more trait they shared. They were both, Thaw says, men with a common interest: the con. During the mid-1950s, when Thaw promoted Cadillacs and "Frost" sold Fords, the Philadelphia auto shows were just the training ground for larger projects. Thaw's preferences ran to quick scams and minor frauds; Rosenberg, Thaw says, had a more abstract turn of mind, favoring "a master plan" with "a great impostor role." He seemed to be working out the details even as he sold cars. "Outwardly he was a very open person," Thaw says, "but there was something elusive about him."

Very elusive. In 1960, Jack Rosenberg left his wife and four children. "Some people needed space," he now says of that desertion, "so I gave them a whole continent." On a plane to the Midwest with Ellen, the woman who would become his second wife, Erhard picked up a copy of *Esquire* and began hunting for a new name; he was determined to avoid discovery by his "very determined mother" and an uncle who was a Philadelphia police captain. His attention was immediately drawn to "The Men Who Made the New Germany." A German name was a natural for him; Rosenberg, remembers Bill Thaw, had long acknowledged Nietzsche as one of his intellectual mentors and the creation of a superrace as his greatest ambition.

Of the article's 16 profiles, two had special appeal: Werner Heisenberg—not, as est claims, von Braun—and Ludwig Erhard. Heisenberg, formulator of the "Uncertainty Principle" which bears his name, was featured because he had "remained unharmed and unaffected" during World War II; the Nazis had been "intellectually incapable" of entering his "ivory tower." Erhard, the jovial and pipe-smoking Economics Minister, had "an uncanny understanding of the economic situation and a special knack of getting along with industrialists of both the new and old school." He was, *Esquire* thought, "the living symbol of the boom." Jack Rosenberg's dream of unassailable, Nobel Prize-winning intellect was thus married to his fantasy of becoming a respected businessman-politician. Werner Hans Erhard. *Werner's hands are hard.* Splendid!

In 1962, Erhard resurfaced on the East Coast with Ellen, who was now pregnant with their second child. He contacted Bill Thaw and resumed their friendship. But a year later, he apparently decided that not even Thaw was to know his whereabouts; he failed to keep his promise and bail Thaw out of jail after an arrest for credit-card fraud. Thaw wondered why his closest ally had vanished so suddenly.

Four years after that incident in Philadelphia, Erhard's liking for women other than his wife led to his own arrest. William LaValley, night security officer of the Sausalito apartment complex where Erhard lived with his family, remembers that Erhard was repeatedly driven home after midnight by women who enjoyed parking with him. They invariably kept the car's headlights on. This interfered with LaValley's surveillance. One night during California's 1967 "Summer of Love," LaValley asked Erhard to dim the lights. "He threatened to kill me," LaValley says. "He came over and grabbed me and tried to drag me out of the car. He said, 'I'm gonna throw you over the railing'—80 feet down—and I said, 'No way.' I wrapped my arm around the steering wheel and put on my red light and finally I got enough attention so that he backed off." Battery charges were dropped, and Erhard was convicted of disturbing the peace, fined $50 and

placed on probation; later, the conviction was officially expunged.

That Erhard should have been frustrated to the point of violence is not surprising; a few miles from Erhard's home, San Francisco's hippies were dropping their responsibilities, taking new names and starting over. Werner Erhard no longer had that option. Now he had seven children. He was Vice-President of Parents Magazine's Cultural Institute, a motivator of encyclopedia supersalesmen. His great escape was, necessarily, inward. His tools were Yoga, Dale Carnegie, Subud, Gestalt, encounter groups, Zen and hypnosis.

In early 1969, Werner Erhard joined the Grolier Society as a division manager. Around that time, he had a brief flirtation with Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard's world-saving crusade. Erhard's relationship with Scientology lasted only a few months, but it was, Scientologists suggest, long enough for him to learn how a successful and effective (some would say frightening) discipline works.

If L. Ron Hubbard was the teacher who provided Erhard with a model for an authoritarian organization, it was the gentle, English-born Alexander Everett who provided Erhard with an organization ripe for an authoritarian takeover. Unlike Hubbard, Alexander was a spiritual idealist, too regal to fight petty interorganizational battles. He was a true patsy, heaven-sent to a Werner Erhard—all Alexander really wanted, he always said, was "to do the highest thing for humanity." He was even modest about Mind Dynamics, his own training, derived in part from José Silva's Mind Control. "Jesus Christ was first in this field," Alexander explained. "We are all spinoffs."

Privately, Erhard told intimates, "We're going to make millions! We're not going to have to pay any money to taxes!"

Werner Erhard was the most successful teacher Alexander Everett hired. He was the first instructor to enroll 100 people or more in every training. His one drawback—that he could not bring himself to give the spiritual teachings which followed the basic course—was no drawback to Erhard; he simply called upon Alexander Everett to deliver that material. Erhard's usefulness, Alexander sensed, would ultimately be in administration; he did not know that Erhard's intention was to market a Mind Dynamics derivative under his own name. Only after Erhard left him did Alexander realize Erhard had brought his friends to Mind Dynamics to have them trained as instructors—for est.

By 1970, Bill Thaw had been through it all: two bad marriages, nine months in prison and a continuing bout with the bottle. There was nothing left for him in the East. With $16,000 in his wallet, he set out for California, "the Holy Land." Five hours after he drove into Las Vegas, he had lost all but $70 at the tables. He reviewed the list of people he could call for help. Werner Erhard was the only one who was remotely clean.

Bill Thaw and Werner Erhard were reunited at a Mind Dynamics lecture Erhard was giving in Los Angeles. "I listened to his shit," Thaw says of that performance, "and I wanted to go out of my skull, but he was good for a couple of hundred dollars." Erhard was better than that: he invited Thaw to come to San Francisco and work for Mind Dynamics. Thaw was quick to convert. "Good living," he realized, "could be very profitable." He liked his new job doing promotion for Mind Dynamics and was happy to advance alongside his mentor, but he was not amused by Erhard's request that he "surrender" to him. Thaw assumed he was only joking.

Erhard was not putting him on, however, and soon Thaw became disenchanted with his friend—so disenchanted, in fact, that he went to Alexander Everett and told him about Erhard's past. Alexander was so surprised by Thaw's revelations that he hired a private detective to confirm them. But, he told Erhard, the results would be meaningless; Alexander refused to be the judge of another man's karma. Bill Thaw hung around Erhard's office waiting in vain for Erhard's dismissal from Mind Dynamics. While he waited, he says he witnessed—and helped create—the key period in the invention of est.

Its name, for one thing. Two weeks before Easter in 1971, Thaw wandered into the City Lights Bookstore and bought a copy of *est: The Steersman Handbook*, by L. Clark Stevens. Est, for Stevens, meant "electronic social transformation," and his book predicted the rise of the "est people," a post-literate generation of individuals "who are willing to give the love and care" that would make a transformed society possible. Best of all, the process was inevitable and invisible. "As the Est gets into phase with the Establishment," Stevens wrote, "it cannot be detected." Thaw says he left the book with Erhard's "Facilitator," a combination valet and sidekick. Within two days, Thaw says, the name of Erhard's proposed organization was Erhard Seminars Training—or est.

And Werner Erhard was suddenly a factory for ideas. "How do I know I'm not the reincarnation of Jesus Christ?" Erhard asked Thaw just before Easter. "You wouldn't believe the feelings I have inside me." Thaw assured him the role had already been taken, that Erhard would have to apply for another. Well, then, Erhard shot back, why not simply incorporate the new religion as "Erhardism"? Thaw said, "You're crazy, sayonara," and left Erhard for good.

It was around this time that Erhard had his "catalytic" experience in his wife's Mustang. It took place, he says, "outside space and time." Apparently so,

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SANDY SOLMON

for in various interviews, Erhard sets this event in a number of locales—either near Greenbrae on Highway 101 or parked on a hillside in San Francisco. Wherever the commemorative plaque is finally placed, the idea is that Erhard "got it" and understood for eternity that "what is, is" and "what isn't, isn't." "What I recognized," Erhard has said, "is that you can't put it together. It's already together and what you have to do is experience it being together. When I realized that, everything I'd already learned became transformed." This explanation of why est is more than the sum of Erhard's previous associations is, however, very close to a verbatim lift from the back cover of the then-popular *Whole Earth Catalogue*—"We can't put it together. It is together."

If "getting it" was an actual and profound experience for Erhard, that moment pales beside his joy at meeting Harry Margolis. Apparently, Erhard hadn't realized that a clever lawyer could

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SANDY SOLMON

The techniques of audience captivation Erhard learned at the feet of Alexander Everett in 1971 (top; Erhard is in front row foreground) come in handy on the road (facing page). Est's promotional wheels whir (bottom) whenever Erhard leaves his plush San Francisco office (center).

so construct his consciousness-expansion business that it would function, in effect, as a nonprofit organization. And Harry Margolis, a Saratoga, California, attorney who specializes in tax shelters, was just the lawyer to set it up. Publicly, Erhard would explain that while est had many opportunities to make a profit, it chose, instead, to use its revenues to serve people more fully. Privately, Erhard told intimates, "We're going to make millions! We're not going to have to pay any money to taxes!" The mechanism was simple—by Margolis' standards. First, Erhard sold the body of knowledge to a foreign company (est insiders suggest this may be Presentaciones Musicales, S.A.). The offshore company, sources say, then sold the American rights to the material to est, Inc. But est, Inc. was a new company and didn't have a spare million lying around. So, these sources indicate, est borrowed the money from P.M.S.A. or another offshore company. The tax savings this loan offered to est, it is said, cut the company's yearly debt to the government to a palatable—indeed, insignificant—amount. Erhard could thus pump most of the revenue from his trainings into other programs. And with few people on salary and an intensive work program for volunteers, est would be guaranteed an instant success.

In mid-1971, unaware that Erhard had other plans, Alexander Everett asked him to become Coordinator of Mind Dynamics. Erhard allowed negotiations to continue while he quietly assembled a staff for est. Randy McNamara became the first trainer-trainee, whose assignments included bringing tea to Erhard. The women from Mind Dynamics and his Grolier Society sales team were enlisted for office personnel. And then, in the August Mind Dynamics course, Erhard spotted Stewart Emery.

Physically, Emery is a smaller, grey-haired version of Erhard, but with a few cultural differences: he is Australian, a former *Vogue* photographer and advertising specialist. And, in 1971, he was the kind of Mind Dynamics student who was vulnerable to any "aliveness" training that promised him greater and faster enlightenment. Early in September, Erhard invited Emery to lead a special sensitivity training for his Mind Dynamics staff. After the marathon encounter session, Emery was invited to a birthday party at Erhard's home. Over white wine, crab, sourdough bread and salad, Erhard turned to him and said, "I want you to know that this is very unusual, but your contribution over the last few days has been of such magnitude, you have earned the right to join us in est." Emery

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replied that he was content to study with Alexander Everett. "There's enough money in this for us all to become millionaires," Erhard told him. But Emery asked for a raincheck from est; his most persistent memory of Erhard's Mind Dynamics trainings was of a logistics assistant, on cue, relieving Erhard of his jacket.

On September 13, 1971, Werner Erhard held a public meeting at the Mark Hopkins Hotel to "present a Mind Dynamics lecture in as straightforward a way as possible." His second intention, he told Alexander Everett, was to announce his split from Mind Dynamics. He invited his benefactor to send a representative and "present whatever views you wish." Everett surprised him by attending the meeting; he reassured Erhard when he announced, "Werner Erhard has decided to do his own thing and that is all right."

On October 4, 1971, Werner Erhard inaugurated est. On December 20, 1971, a company called Saratoga Restaurant Equipment Co. decided it would do much better in the mind business—as Erhard Seminars Training, Inc. It seemed, at the time, to have been a wise decision; when, four months later, Harry Margolis filed the est tax return for the year ending April 30, 1972, he was able to claim an interest expense deduction of $38,706 and an amortization expense deduction of $40,000. In addition to whatever tax dollars may have been saved by offshore transactions, it is not inconceivable that Saratoga Restaurant Equipment offered significant carry-forward losses to est.

These claims did not go uncontested. In October 1975—after an extensive investigation that had as many as five Internal Revenue agents building the case against him—Harry Margolis was indicted on one charge of conspiracy and 22 counts of aiding and assisting in the preparation of fraudulent tax returns. Est's tax return was one count in the Margolis indictment; the IRS thought that $928 was a more realistic figure for est's interest expense deduction, and as for the amortization expense deduction, the government argued that est was entitled to no deduction at all.

First, Werner Erhard said, you vacuum the top of the carpet. Gonneke Spits, a convert from the Grolier days, and Laurel Scheaf, the first President of est, watched carefully. They studied his technique as he ran the vacuum over the rug. Then Erhard flipped the carpet and vacuumed the bottom. Next he pulled the carpet aside and vacuumed the bare floor. Finally he set the carpet back in place and demonstrated how it was to be cleaned a fourth time. He told them that books were to be removed from the shelves before being dusted. Windows were to be washed three times. Every pleat of the draperies was to be adjusted after cleaning. Gonneke and Laurel agreed to take responsibility for all this. They called it "getting the job done."

From the earliest days of est, Erhard concentrated on enlisting women—a carry-over from his Grolier sales techniques. A college student who was trained under Erhard's direction to sell Grolier's "exciting new program" of preschool learning materials to suburban housewives recalls that Erhard "wanted this to be more than a job for us, he wanted us to identify with the organization." Erhard sponsored get-togethers and trips to the beach, and each morning, before his mostly female sales team went into the field, there were required "parties," with Beatles music, story-telling, clapping games and group cheers. "It was unnatural," the trainee remembers. "We didn't see him that much. We were encouraged to think it was special when we did." Erhard always made it his business to appear for the final lecture of the training program. "We aren't selling anything," he told the women. "This is a new concept. You don't put pressure on people to buy. You ask them a series of questions, and by answering them, the customers decide for themselves."

Est has the kinds of employees even the CIA can't hire—but that, perhaps, is because the CIA does not use Scientology "e meters"

Erhard's Orwellian redefinition of language was such a powerful sales weapon that soon after he founded est he was filling 150-seat trainings at $150 a seat. There was not enough money yet, he said, to pay his employees what they were worth; they were so convinced that "serving Werner" was a valuable contribution to their aliveness that salary, however, was rarely an unpleasant "consideration." Magically, the business scraped together enough money for Erhard to separate his office from the staff's and move into Franklin House, the San Francisco mansion he would eventually buy and fill with antique furniture and Oriental art.

Stewart Emery saw that Erhard was right—the "traffic" did seem to go his way—and decided to cash in his raincheck. Joining the est staff, he found, was more difficult than it had been in 1971. Erhard was now a certified guru, and a guru's main occupation is creating problems for other people to solve. Over lunch, Erhard presented Emery with two new objections to his employment. Money, of course, was one. Surrender was number two. "Everyone who works for me serves me," Erhard said. "How do I know you'll do what I say?" Emery assured him that although he might, at some point, leave the est organization, the only reason to work for Erhard was to learn everything he had to teach. He could hardly do that, he explained, if he superimposed his own beliefs onto Erhard's. "Now I know I can trust you," Erhard said. He agreed to make Emery est's second highest paid employee.

In late 1972, Werner Erhard and Stewart Emery went to Hawaii to lead an est training. Afterward, as they lay on the beach at the Kahala Hilton, Erhard outlined a plan. He and Stewart and Randy McNamara would give the trainings: one a month in San Francisco and Los Angeles, five times a year in New York and Hawaii, a few times annually in Aspen. Laurel Scheaf would run the main office in San Francisco, while Erhard and Emery and their families could move to Hawaii. It was a sensible plan for a small organization. But Erhard had not anticipated public acceptance on the grand scale.

He got a hint that massive success was possible when Dr. Robert Larzelere gave up his private practice to work for est at $75 a week. Then Dr. Philip Lee, Professor of Social Medicine and former Chancellor of the University of California, San Francisco, took the training, was powerfully impressed by it and joined the est Advisory Board. Professional validation dovetailed with est's "invisible sell" to bring more people into the training; suddenly est was taking in so much money that the existing shelters were no longer adequate. This is why, insiders suggest, Erhard established "est of Hawaii" in 1973 as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization owned by est graduates—as an experiment in alternative financial structures for est.

With success came the need for a larger staff. This was a problem for Erhard; there would not be time to bind each new employee to him through charisma alone. If he ran an expanded est solely through intimidation and fear, some of these new employees might leave and broadcast their negative experiences. Worse, they might complain to the Cali-

fornia Department of Industrial Relations—they might not agree that they had "volunteered" from 35 to 50 extra hours to each 40-hour work week, they might not be willing to state that in those additional hours they had been working as "managers." It was essential, therefore, to hire people who were not only qualified but who had special personality characteristics. They had to be willing to dedicate themselves to est, virtually eliminating their personal lives in the process. And, most important of all, they had to acknowledge that they were "serving God" and had no rights or privileges. These are the kinds of employees even the CIA can't hire—but that, perhaps, is because the CIA does not use Scientology "e meters."

Here Erhard found a reason to keep Dr. Larzelere on staff. He appointed him head of the est "Well Being Department" and had him trained to use the two tin cans, wires and meters that comprise the Scientology auditing device. Then he had Larzelere process the staff. The technique—one of many Erhard has "borrowed" from Scientology—was simple enough: the est staff member held a tin can in each hand and answered questions about his loyalty to Erhard and est. If the meter jumped beyond acceptable limits, the subject still had a "charge," an emotional "position" about the question. That would be "cleared" by intensive questioning until the staff member "processed out" his "upset." Over the years, this "one-to-one consulting"—and the repeated insistence that an employee's life "doesn't work" until he surrenders to Erhard—has become the standard est technique for eliminating staff "barriers" to complete acceptance of whatever the est propaganda happens to be.

Larzelere's Scientology training, Erhard thought, was too cursory to guarantee effective results. Fortunately, two high-level Scientologists—one had reached OT7, which is very good indeed—were available, and they seemed willing to supervise Larzelere's operation while they developed material for Erhard. Est considered these Scientologists important enough to pay them more than some trainers were earning. Wisely, est's new "researchers" requested that their employment be kept secret; they knew that Scientology would not welcome the modification of its material in a rival discipline. For his part, Erhard must have been delighted that the Scientologists requested no public acknowledgment; as he well understood, the government would surely be less inclined to fill school curriculums with est material if est's Scientology connection were widely publicized.

Because their assignment—correcting L. Ron Hubbard's data and creating a new vocabulary for est—was so extraordinary, the Scientologists had unusual privileges. They were not required to attend the 8:30 a.m. "jack 'em up and glaze 'em over" meetings. They could smoke cigarettes without criticism. And they had continual access to Erhard, who liked to sit with them by his fireplace as they brainstormed together about the material they were developing for the Guest Seminar Leader's Program, the Communication Workshop and the training itself. So when these Scientologists speak of Erhard as "the source of est," they do not mean, as other employees do, that Erhard originates all est data. "Werner has a fantastic ability to source data," one of them explains. "He can get to the source of the viewpoint of the material. He can see where the creator of that viewpoint is coming from. He can give a better talk on Scientology than someone who's been heavily involved."

By 1974, the Scientologists were tired of est. The social life was dull—"It was like the women were already married," one said—and they were ready to move on. That seemed to suit Erhard. The material they had developed had been successfully absorbed into est. And Dr. Larzelere's operation was running smoothly. Now that he could be assured of total employee support, Erhard was ready for other consultants: Alan Lakein, the time efficiency expert, and Leonard Orr, who promised greater employee productivity to est if Erhard would then increase salaries.

If he left est, Emery was warned, he should be very careful. Erhard had a premonition Emery might become seriously ill

The est organization was becoming more secretive, more mechanical. Erhard kept testing his staff, probing their limits. His rage was a weapon, often shown but rarely used; it was reserved for anyone bold enough to propose a change in his methods—such as Harry Margolis, who suggested, on various occasions, a financial restructuring of est. "I don't need anyone around who questions me!" Erhard reportedly shouted after one such session with Margolis.

The est staff turned mute. On his birthday in 1973, Erhard's "rich grandmother" bought him a Mercedes-Benz. Curiously, this wealthy lady—who seems not to have been mentioned around est before this purchase—did not buy the car from a Mercedes dealer or even a private owner. Instead, she bought it from Associated Convalescent Enterprises, a Saratoga-based and Margolis-connected holding company. The est staff was unanimously incurious. They were equally silent about the financial ambiguities of est of Hawaii. When Erhard returned from a European trip, he told them that the greatest tragedy of World War II was the destruction of Renaissance art treasures. No one blanched.

In the advanced trainings for those who aspired to lead guest seminars, graduates were cursed for their failure to sign up scores of new converts for est—and they took Erhard's tongue-lashing as proof that their lives didn't work, and set out to do better. "Help stamp out reasonableness!" signs were placed around local est offices. Supervisors took these notices literally. "Don't sit there like a fucking *body*!" one shouted at a hapless assistant. "Make yourself a *being*! Create some phone calls coming in!" Secretaries wrote notes to themselves and tacked them above their typewriters. "Goal for the year," one read. "Provide Werner with as much certainty as possible." It was all part of Erhard's plan to create a continual crisis mentality, maximizing performance by convincing his employees that the enemy was at the very gates. "The Germans," Erhard liked to tell his San Francisco staff, "are in Oakland."

Outside "the office of source," as Franklin House was now called, est graduates were bringing carloads of guests to their seminars and creating, without compensation, a 100 percent annual growth rate for est. The first journalists to discover the newest California phenomenon were unanimously enthusiastic. But inside est, Werner Erhard had a problem. Stewart Emery no longer wanted the dual roles of trainer and Chief Executive—est, he insisted, needed a full-time president. So Werner Erhard set out to find a very special executive: a company man who would short-circuit any threat to Erhard's power while he relieved Erhard of the responsibility of representing est to the public.

From the back, people said, you couldn't tell the difference between Werner Erhard and Stewart Emery. Once that was flattering to both men. By late 1974, though, Emery was the only key est employee who had not surrendered to Er-

hard. Perhaps he was even subversive; he could not deliver Erhard's directives to the staff without adding a little commentary that somehow knocked the edge off the master's commands. But Emery was too valuable to be purged—with his background in media, he was clearly the est executive best qualified to meet the press and represent est in public. Erhard, by comparison, came across in interview situations as an embarrassment to honorable car and encyclopedia salesmen. Before his first appearance on *The Mike Douglas Show*, for example, Erhard's Head of Production set up a simulated talk show in Franklin House, with est employees playing Douglas and the other guests. "Werner had to be shown that people like Douglas have a way of interjecting something when they think it's not important enough or funny enough," the producer says. The dress rehearsal failed. On *The Mike Douglas Show*, Erhard still seemed to be hustling.

Peter Wanger was one presidential candidate who could be effective in the organization and credible to the public. He had taken the est training in the spring of 1973; it stimulated him to send est a barrage of ideas. Eventually his letters reached Stewart Emery's office. Emery read them carefully—Peter Wanger had built Granny Goose Potato Chips into a company Del Monte snapped up for several million dollars. Now he was looking to get involved in what he called "the head business." Erhard met him and was impressed. Wanger went skiing, believing that he would become President of est when he returned.

Then Don Cox, General Manager of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of California, started looking for a new assistant. His ad included the phrase "est graduate preferred." Suddenly Don Cox was a candidate for the est presidency. Stewart Emery felt he was the only possible choice—Cox had been Director of Planning for Coca-Cola, U.S.A., and had taught at Harvard Business School. Cox was an experienced team player. Cox got the job.

Peter Wanger was very disappointed. He had already proved he could turn one new business into a much-loved success. He knew he could do the same for est. He couldn't understand why Erhard didn't understand his new company was at a crisis point—unless est normalized its operations, its erratic and trivial policies would create hordes of enemies. Although est might appear to be sweeping the country, Wanger was concerned with a counter-trend Erhard didn't seem to notice: by the time est "succeeded," no one might care.

In the summer of 1974, Peter Wanger got over his disappointment. Once again, he blitzed Erhard with letters. Finally Erhard called. "You have value for est," he said. "Fine," Wanger thought. "I'll get in there and somehow get the thing straightened out." By which he meant: convert est into a partnership, eliminate the authoritarianism that gave the est offices the charm of a bunker and jettison the "I'm ok, you're not ok" attitude of the est executives. Est had a different idea.

Peter Wanger was assigned to the shipping department. He was responsible for making sure the training materials were properly packed. If Wanger did that expertly, Erhard laughed, he would next be assigned to cleaning toilets.

Wanger had been a shipping clerk for less than a month when he was summoned to the president's office. Don Cox was unhappy: Wanger had been upsetting the organization. Wanger agreed that he had not been slavishly following instructions; the telephone campaign designed to force people to volunteer for the logistics crews had, on his initiative, been replaced by phone calls that simply offered est graduates the opportunity to help out. As a result, Wanger said, the number of volunteers was dramatically increasing. He considered this an improvement.

Cox disagreed. "'We want you to do exactly what is being done and not come up with any new solutions." "Fine," Wanger replied, "I'll come up with solutions and I'm willing to keep them to myself." "No, you cannot come up with any solutions," Cox insisted. Wanger was equally firm. "My mind is unable not to come up with solutions," he told Cox, "so I'm unable to do that." The President of est began to blink. He said, "You either do it this way or you choose to leave." "I don't 'chose to leave,' " Wanger said, "but I *will* leave because I'm unable to do it the other way. When do you want me to go?" At this point, Wanger recalls, Cox "went catatonic." His eyes glazed over. "Now?" Wanger asked. Cox nodded. In less than an hour, Wanger was out of the est offices.

That left only Stewart Emery to be reeducated—or purged. Inadvertently, Peter Wanger determined it would be the latter. Around March 1975, Wanger decided to establish his own program; he and one of the Franklin House Scientologists began to collaborate on a 12-hour event. "The Partnership," unlike est, was to be a theatrical experience engineered to guide an audience through progressively elevated psychological spaces. No one would be intimidated, no

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one would be "made wrong," no one would be told, "If you think your life works, go home and look in a mirror at the tragedy that is your life." Wanger was very excited about his new project. He invited Stewart Emery and est Enrollment Director Carol Augustus to look at the outline.

The news of that weekend meeting reached Erhard via serendipity. The following Monday, he got on a plane for Los Angeles and Peter Wanger was in the next seat. Wanger was bubbling over with enthusiasm now that Stewart Emery had expressed cautious interest in his project. Erhard smiled.

Stewart Emery was 3,000 miles away, preparing for a Washington pretraining seminar. On Tuesday, according to his schedule, he'd be speaking to 1,500 people in New York. On Wednesday, he'd pitch est to another 1,500 in Boston. On Thursday, he'd be leading a guest seminar for 1,000 people in Washington. On Saturday, he'd give "Making Relationships Work" in Hawaii. Then he would fly all night, and, at 9:00 a.m., he'd put 250 people through a 12-hour training in Los Angeles. And now, ten minutes before he was to begin the first of these performances, Don Cox was on the phone.

"Stewart, I understand you saw Peter Wanger this weekend," Cox began. "Was Carol with you?" Yes, Emery said. Was the purpose of the meeting to discuss Wanger's training? Yes. Had Wanger offered Emery a job? Yes. Did est headquarters know—in advance—of this meeting? No. "I consider your presence there and Carol's presence there does not serve Werner," Cox said, "so I have terminated Carol and she has left the organization. Where are you with that?"

"Where I am with that," Emery replied, "is that I don't have time to be anywhere with it. I've got 250 people waiting for me. But if I had time to be somewhere about it, right now where I'm at is that what you did represents everything I find insupportable about est. And I don't have time to talk to you now."

Carol Augustus had been asked to leave the building immediately. Stewart Emery was recalled from his week on the road. "I'm unwilling for you to talk to 10,000 est graduates and accumulate all that agreement," Cox told him. "I can't trust you to use it to serve Werner." Emery would have to take a salary cut. He could give the weekend trainings and, if he served Erhard well, an occasional guest seminar. But first, he would have to acknowledge he had been "a traitor to est." "Until you have unquestionably demonstrated your loyalty to Werner and we are clear that you are a person of integrity, we won't allow you to take a major part in est," Cox said. Until Emery gave up all his purposes and intentions and surrendered to Erhard, his life would never work. And, if he left the organization, Cox warned Emery to be very careful—Erhard had a premonition that Emery might become seriously ill. "Don, I no longer want to be part of the est organization," Emery said.

But the drama was to get even more trivial.

President Cox called a staff meeting to explain it all away. Carol Augustus had been fired, he said, because she had looked at data outside the organization without permission. Stewart Emery, employees learned, had left because he was unwilling to experience through a "barrier." Eight months later, when people kept asking what that barrier was, Don Cox felt compelled to call Stewart Emery. Perhaps Emery's perspective had mellowed with time and he could be persuaded to make no public statements about his est experiences. Or—even better—maybe Emery had "processed out" his "upset," in which case est would welcome Emery's public explanation for leaving. Est would even agree to put out the same story. It could be, Cox suggested, very simply handled. All Emery had to do was acknowledge to the press that he had created his barrier totally by himself.

Erhard has a near-total control over his employees—they even tell him about their sex lives

With Stewart Emery out of the way, 1975 should have been the best of all possible years for Werner Erhard. Marcia Seligson's enthusiastic *New Times* article about him was reprinted in *Cosmopolitan*, and that magazine had, according to est, received a record number of queries. In the spring, Erhard journeyed to Japan, where he unlocked the secret of the toughest koan for the astonished Zen masters: the sound of one hand clapping, he told them, is simply the sound of one hand clapping. And Erhard had successfully expanded his salon. Now the guests at his Franklin House dinners might find, to their surprise, that their names had been individually engraved on their invitations. Between wines, Erhard's headwaiter might dispense a touch of sherbert to clear their palates. "You go to one of these dinners and you get a different sense of time," a guest recalls. "Everybody was thankful to be able to be of service to him."

But once he ruled alone, Werner Erhard became increasingly arbitrary and erratic in his exercise of power. Already, the use of 10-pitch IBM Selectric type—and the closing "Love" on the est letterhead—had been "reserved for Werner's personal use." Now, after his visit to Japan, Erhard inexplicably initiated a non-exercise called "sitting" for all est employees. "Each member of the staff is to sit for 60 minutes a day, as a regular part of your personal life," they were told. "Do not go into your space or do anything; just sit, with nothing added or taken away." Whatever benefit this confers upon the sitter, one other conclusion is inescapable: sitting removes another hour each day from what remains of the est staff's "personal life."

Which isn't to say that est employees had much autonomy to begin with. Although est denies there is such a thing as an "official uniform" and insists that it's coincidental most trainers dress exactly like Erhard, the fact is that est clothing styles have been traditionally determined by the highest levels of the est staff. "Part of this agreement," Don Cox told one seminar leader as he presented her with a $1,500 clothing allowance, "is that you will purchase the wardrobe with the consultation of Ron Mann, our wardrobe consultant." The docility of the est staff in agreeing to everything the high-ups decree is quite remarkable—employees even "de-bonus" themselves as an act of contrition when they do something wrong. "De-bonus me $10 for not getting Dox [Cox] the shoe-holder to polish shoes," one girl confesses. "I have been de-bonused $50 for mishandling Don's finances, specifically his phone bill," another notes.

But the most extraordinary abdication of the staff's personal freedom is its willingness to accept the recently reestablished sex codes. "Stay in communication with Werner about your relationships, whether they involve fucking or not," employees are told. "Be especially conscientious about communicating about relationships which include fucking." Apparently, est staffers may sleep with anyone they want—as long as their partners are not est employees. They may even sleep with fellow employees, "except those with whom you work directly, unless you already have a screwing relationship with them which Werner knows about." Married staffers who wish to have affairs with their co-workers must

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EAST AND MIDWEST ORDERS SHIPPED BY AIR

satisfy an even more bizarre requirement: "No married staff member is to fuck anybody in est except his or her spouse unless Don Cox receives a letter from the one agreeing to allow the other to fuck someone else. Then, unless the letter of agreement establishes specific guidelines as to who the spouse may fuck, the policies which apply to unmarried staff members will apply to that spouse." And Erhard is no casual voyeur about the sex codes. The staff is on notice: "If there are upsets and/or if you're not getting the job done, Werner will assume it is because you are fucking whoever you fuck, and either you or your partner will have to leave the est staff."

Werner Erhard does not yet control everyone's behavior, however. On October 3, 1975, a San Francisco grand jury indicted est lawyer Harry Margolis for conspiracy to defraud the tax collectors. In collaboration with the Banco Popular Antiliano, Margolis was alleged to have manipulated the bank accounts of 22 clients—including est—by transferring nonexistent funds for American tax benefits. Documents were backdated, according to the indictment, and the true position of these accounts was maintained in secret accounting records.

Suddenly est's problems multiplied. Between January and August, "out statistics"—unregisters, withdrawals and transfers—in est's trainings averaged only 16 percent. In the fall, they zoomed to an average of 28 percent, and in San Francisco, est's home territory, October statistics reveal that one person was dropping the training for every two who paid their $250. As if San Francisco's apparent change of heart wasn't enough to trouble est Central, a Hawaiian judge ruled that est was practicing psychology and that a psychologist must be present in future est trainings. (Est is appealing the Hawaiian decision.) Inevitably, a spate of books about est appeared. Some were only mildly favorable, but all were profitable; the most authoritative of these, by Adelaide Bry, sold to paperback for $225,000. And, closer to home, other trainings were beginning to attract attention—especially Stewart Emery's "Actualizations" program, a supposedly benign and anti-jargon approach that, along with its modest promise of an improved ability to communicate, is also said to "cure" est graduates troubled by est "brainwashing."

But it was the Margolis indictment that had the greatest potential to embarrass est and discredit its claims of total financial rectitude. It is always unfortunate when a corporation's lawyer becomes a focus for investigation, and it is especially unfortunate when that lawyer is a sophisticated manipulator with a history of complicated transactions. Even tax shelter specialists have had trouble following the progress of a Harry Margolis deal, and, as Margolis does not comment on his clients' affairs, very little is really known about the intricacies of his operation. A number of intriguing questions, however, have been pieced together, and they do suggest there may be more to est's financial setup than Werner Erhard likes to acknowledge. Is, for example, EST International, Ltd., the Virgin Islands-based owner of the *Berkeley Barb* newspaper, related to est, Inc.? What continuing role does Associated Convalescent Enterprises play in est? Why does est seem to have entered into partnerships with other oddly named companies—and why do they seem so unprofitable? What is Twine, Inc., and why, on January 2, 1976, did Erhard Seminars Training become Twine? And finally, why is it that Werner Erhard can't divulge the name of the "charitable trust" that, according to Don Cox, "owns est for the benefit of the public, to whom est ultimately belongs"?

Why can't Erhard divulge the name of the "charitable trust" that "owns est for the benefit of the public"?

Est sends out at least one mailing a month to its graduates, and Erhard dispatches special communiqués whenever a new revelation pops into his consciousness, but at no time in this period has est notified its graduates of its lawyer's indictment or its own legal problems. Instead, Erhard has taken the offensive, in an attempt to win increased respectability for est. In September, est had sponsored a voter registration drive. In October, Erhard announced a special evening for the clergy. In November, he brought his entire family—both wives, all seven children and his parents—onstage with him at the "Making Relationships Work" event to show the 6,000 est graduates that his relationships were impeccable. (Still, Harry Rosenberg, Erhard's younger brother, told him recently, "To me now, you're more the guy I'm trying to please than you are my brother and the person I've chosen to serve. . . . I do a lot of pretending around you.") In December, Erhard quietly met with representatives of other consciousness businesses, apparently to win pledges of cooperation. In January, Erhard traveled to five cities, confiding to 30,000 people that in 1976 he would reluctantly become a public figure.

Est memoranda suggest that this move is hardly reluctant. As long ago as last October, minutes of est staff meetings prophesied great activity for 1976: "Werner wants to have a feminist program no later than April" and "Werner wants an enormous outdoor event in July." More recently, est has been considering holding "media events" in Los Angeles and New York, "to have graduates in media behind est and inspire them to support est actively." In Erhard's ideal world, apparently, the media is merely the messenger.

But it is in the Graduate Division that est plans to build "a foundation . . . which will be able to support an expansion of est to 40,000,000 people in a similar way that the 4,000 graduates supported the expansion of the graduate body to 67,000 people." By December 1976, est hopes 30,000 est graduates will have enrolled in its seminars, 13,000 graduates will have volunteered their services and 73,000 people will have paid to "experience" the "Making Relationships Work" videotape. Naturally, more staff procedures will be required—to keep the staff well-trained "until an est academy is formed."

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There is a legend that
tells of the gift of wine.
How it was called the
nectar of the gods.
Centuries later from the
ageless vineyards of France
one wine became the nectar
of wines.
That one was Nectarose.
The French Rose with
a legendary taste.
Tonight enjoy the gift of the
gods. The nectar of wines.
Nectarose.
NECTAROSE
IMPORTED BY REES STREET WINE MERCHANTS NEW YORK & SAN FRANCISCO AD PREPARED BY J.T.S.P.

THE NECTAR OF WINES

NECTAROSE

satisfy an even more bizarre requirement: "No married staff member is to fuck anybody in est except his or her spouse unless Don Cox receives a letter from the one agreeing to allow the other to fuck someone else. Then, unless the letter of agreement establishes specific guidelines as to who the spouse may fuck, the policies which apply to unmarried staff members will apply to that spouse." And Erhard is no casual voyeur about the sex codes. The staff is on notice: "If there are upsets and/or if you're not getting the job done, Werner will assume it is because you are fucking whoever you fuck, and either you or your partner will have to leave the est staff."

Werner Erhard does not yet control everyone's behavior, however. On October 3, 1975, a San Francisco grand jury indicted est lawyer Harry Margolis for conspiracy to defraud the tax collectors. In collaboration with the Banco Popular Antiliano, Margolis was alleged to have manipulated the bank accounts of 22 clients—including est—by transferring nonexistent funds for American tax benefits. Documents were backdated, according to the indictment, and the true position of these accounts was maintained in secret accounting records.

Suddenly est's problems multiplied. Between January and August, "out statistics"—unregisters, withdrawals and transfers—in est's trainings averaged only 16 percent. In the fall, they zoomed to an average of 28 percent, and in San Francisco, est's home territory, October statistics reveal that one person was dropping the training for every two who paid their $250. As if San Francisco's apparent change of heart wasn't enough to trouble est Central, a Hawaiian judge ruled that est was practicing psychology and that a psychologist must be present in future est trainings. (Est is appealing the Hawaiian decision.) Inevitably, a spate of books about est appeared. Some were only mildly favorable, but all were profitable; the most authoritative of these, by Adelaide Bry, sold to paperback for $225,000. And, closer to home, other trainings were beginning to attract attention—especially Stewart Emery's "Actualizations" program, a supposedly benign and anti-jargon approach that, along with its modest promise of an improved ability to communicate, is also said to "cure" est graduates troubled by est "brainwashing."

But it was the Margolis indictment that had the greatest potential to embarrass est and discredit its claims of total financial rectitude. It is always unfortunate when a corporation's lawyer becomes a focus for investigation, and it is especially unfortunate when that lawyer is a sophisticated manipulator with a history of complicated transactions. Even tax shelter specialists have had trouble following the progress of a Harry Margolis deal, and, as Margolis does not comment on his clients' affairs, very little is really known about the intricacies of his operation. A number of intriguing questions, however, have been pieced together, and they do suggest there may be more to est's financial setup than Werner Erhard likes to acknowledge. Is, for example, EST International, Ltd., the Virgin Islands-based owner of the *Berkeley Barb* newspaper, related to est, Inc.? What continuing role does Associated Convalescent Enterprises play in est? Why does est seem to have entered into partnerships with other oddly named companies—and why do they seem so unprofitable? What is Twine, Inc., and why, on January 2, 1976, did Erhard Seminars Training become Twine? And finally, why is it that Werner Erhard can't divulge the name of the "charitable trust" that, according to Don Cox, "owns est for the benefit of the public, to whom est ultimately belongs"?

Why can't Erhard divulge the name of the "charitable trust" that "owns est for the benefit of the public"?

Est sends out at least one mailing a month to its graduates, and Erhard dispatches special communiqués whenever a new revelation pops into his consciousness, but at no time in this period has est notified its graduates of its lawyer's indictment or its own legal problems. Instead, Erhard has taken the offensive, in an attempt to win increased respectability for est. In September, est had sponsored a voter registration drive. In October, Erhard announced a special evening for the clergy. In November, he brought his entire family—both wives, all seven children and his parents—onstage with him at the "Making Relationships Work" event to show the 6,000 est graduates that his relationships were impeccable. (Still, Harry Rosenberg, Erhard's younger brother, told him recently, "To me now, you're more the guy I'm trying to please than you are my brother and the person I've chosen to serve. . . . I do a lot of pretending around you.") In December, Erhard quietly met with representatives of other consciousness businesses, apparently to win pledges of cooperation. In January, Erhard traveled to five cities, confiding to 30,000 people that in 1976 he would reluctantly become a public figure.

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raphy." According to the prospectus, this "could start with the scene in a station wagon as Werner turns to his lawyer and says, 'I've got something. The question is, what to do with it: make a fortune selling it to executives, make a fortune franchising it . . . or serve people, be completely ethical, do it right and make it available to everybody?'" While his team of writers is figuring out the answer, Erhard has begun to explore the possibilities of television. The *Today* show, however, was not the wisest place to start—Barbara Walters' effective interrogation a few weeks ago was matched only by her cameraman's relentless close-up on the rigid Erhard. But at least Erhard was able to unveil his new outfit: a suit-and-tie combination coordinated especially for him by San Francisco designer Claude Langwith.

With all that Erhard has to do getting the world working right, it is reassuring to learn that he still has time for the little things. On New Year's Day, for example, Erhard discovered that the downstairs washing machine in Franklin House had been left on, and worse—it had a safety pin in it. Naturally, this provoked the writing of yet another memo. "Werner wants you to locate the source of the above and then go through the process of cleaning that kind of thing up," an aide wrote. "This includes creating a policy to correct this situation from happening in the future and also a determination of why this situation was not being supervised to enable its discovery by someone other than Werner." The new policy didn't work. Two weeks later, Erhard returned to Franklin House to discover a dysfunctional light bulb in the front porch light. "I don't believe it!" he shouted.

If anyone close to Erhard notices that his private obsessions are disturbingly trivial—comparisons with Captain Queeg and Richard Nixon inevitably come to mind—nothing is ever said about it. For Werner Erhard has successfully programmed his staff with the circular reasoning which is at the heart of est's metaphysics; the est propaganda machine would function even if it were generally agreed that this emperor has no clothes. And because his lieutenants seem to know only how to say yes to his every whim, Werner Erhard may actually believe that others—est's devoted graduates and its trainees in the years ahead—will also remain blindly loyal to the organization that gave them the est training, no matter what foul "allegations" are aired in "the media."

What is most ironic about est is that Erhard has accurately gauged his supporters' capacity for unthinking acceptance of some fairly transparent fictions. At the graduate seminars in Los Angeles the week after Erhard's January event, for example, est's seminar leaders read this announcement: "I took a friend who has not taken the training to the graduate experience with Werner. He had an incredible time and was absolutely blown away by the people who were there and the space they created for one another. On the way home, he kept quoting Werner and giggling—'*It is the way it is*, I can't believe he said that, that's great.' Now my friend wants to be a trainer." A trainer! The faithful nodded in unison, smiled right on cue; they remembered how, for a day or so after the training, they too had entertained that same unattainable fantasy. Characteristically, no one seemed to notice that the seminar leader's "friend" couldn't possibly exist simultaneously in half a dozen seminar rooms.

The totality of Erhard's influence over his flock combined with his eagerness to expand his dominion in every direction suggest that he is far more than the Duddy Kravitz of the human potential movement. The human potential groups do not have 15-page security memos. At their public events, human potential groups do not have "six unmarked staff security assistants seated in the front area of the arena floor." Human potential groups do not train their leaders with exercises that require them to shout: "What I want you to know is the way things work around here. And the way things work around here is that we do it my way or we don't do it at all."

A friend of Erhard: "It's always as if there's an incredible secret plan. As soon as he gets the world, he's going to give it back to us"

No, the human potential movement doesn't operate like that. But an army might—and however much the est training may be about spontaneous joy and the reclamation of the self, the est organization increasingly looks like Werner Erhard's private army. A modern army, to be sure, with very sophisticated weapons: a highly motivated propaganda unit, an openly litigious attitude toward any critical media and a pyramid sales technique that has its lowest-level operatives sell an ideology to their friends for an abstract reward. Victories are equally modern; est wins another battle each time John Denver sings "Looking for Space" or a celebrity takes its "basic training" and announces to a national audience, "In just two weekends, Werner Erhard changed my life." Well behind the lines, the general is enjoying his marvelous and very private joke—no one senses that "aliveness" may only be a clever slogan for an army that doesn't even realize it's waging a war. After all, how could his soldiers know? If there were something as serious as a war going on, surely Werner would have told them.

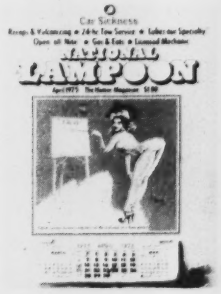
One question remains: what *does* Werner Erhard really want? Are there *any* limits to his ambition? "That's the question people around Werner are asking now," a friend of Erhard's recently confirmed. "He talks like, 'You wouldn't have that criticism if you knew the secret plan.' It's always as if there's an incredible secret plan. As soon as he gets the world, he's going to give it back to us."

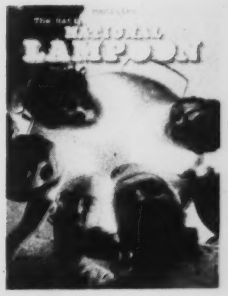
Fortunately, the world still seems a bit beyond Erhard's grasp, and perhaps the disastrous results already produced by this century's leaders with unlimited wills to power will convince people that their need to believe might best be satisfied somewhere other than est. But before the public realizes that his plans seem to include a staggering number of people, Werner Erhard will use his giant outdoor events and his massive public relations campaign to prove that his is only a philanthropic crusade to get the world running on time. To establish his credibility, however, he is forced to take a calculated risk and expose himself to people far away from the est training rooms, where the atmosphere has a strange way of overcoming the strongest resistance. So in 1976, five years after Erhard's army first took form, America will finally have its chance to see Werner Erhard plain.

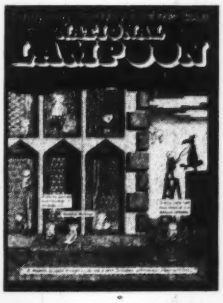
Est's higher-ups, of course, are anticipating another glorious success for their champion. To prepare themselves for the next unprecedented wave of enlistments, in fact, est will temporarily curb its omnivorous expansionist urge this year to prepare for those 40 million Americans who, est believes, will want desperately to be insulted, processed, shared and lectured into self-awareness. To make certain the est employees understand that the apparent slowdown doesn't mean est is in decline, est President Cox spelled out the year's goal for them—in yet another memo: "1976," he wrote, "is the year of growth by consolidation, which is to say, in part, the time to get 100% integrity into our operation as an organization and as individuals."

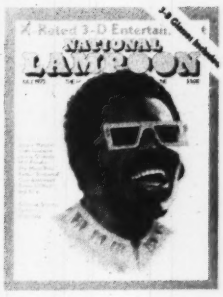
They have their work cut out for them. ●

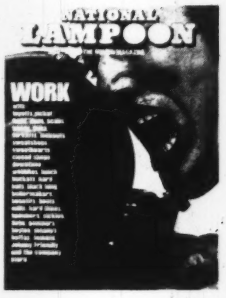
This year there will be thirteen issues of the National Lampoon.

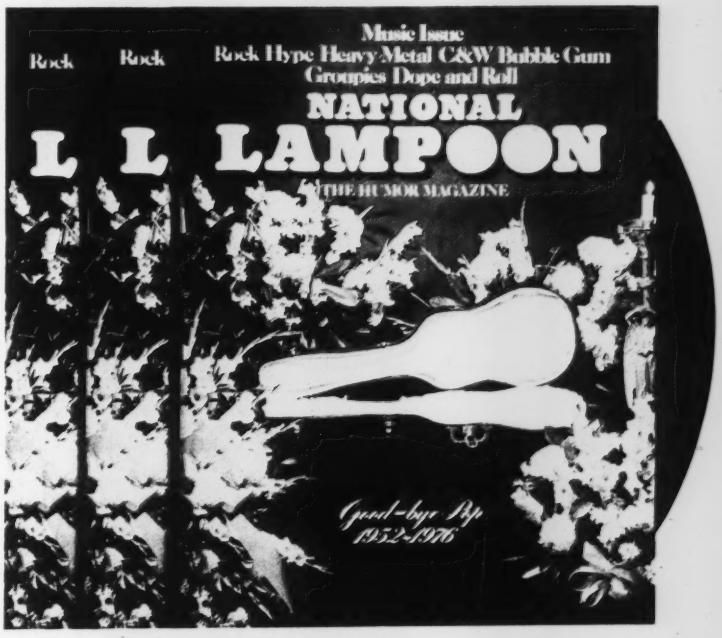












One of them is a record album.

"Good-Bye, Pop" via Epic Records

For two decades this bearded eccentric, swathed in furs and dripping with rings, has charmed a small cult of readers. Now wider audiences are discovering Edward Gorey's bizarre illustrated tales

A Gorey story

By Robert Cooke Goolrick

There is Millicent Frastley, devoured by insects, and little Neville, who died of ennui. There is Charlotte Sophia, struck down and killed by her father's car. There is Madame O—, who learns her cousin's mustache is false and plunges off a parapet, feet, arms and black feather boa flying with elegant panache. There is Maudie Splaytoes, plié-ing and jeté-ing through the monotonous haze of a ballet dancer's life, until a great dark bird flies into the propeller of her airplane and she crashes into the Camargue.

A barrel of laughs? Not exactly. Whimsically macabre, perhaps. For 20 years, Edward Gorey has been patiently creating a world in which Things Happen and the people to whom they either happen or they do not. Working in a form almost forgotten, the illustrated novel, Gorey leads us on a lonely tour of all the rooms we have locked away in a barely serviced wing of the imagination, where cracks suddenly gape open in the once perfect floors as whatever maid is left serves tea on a silver tray. His are the tricks of the Grand Guignol, and ours the response—the distancing laughter and the sudden human pity elicited by a gallon or two of well-placed stage blood. In Gorey's world, tailoring is always perfect and hysteria barely contained.

Since 1953, when he published his first book, *The Unstrung Harp,* Gorey has produced three dozen illustrated novellas, most no longer than 30 pages, with texts so brief, so austere, they would seem to be parentheses in some larger work. Many of the books have appeared under his own imprimatur, The Fantod Press. (Fantod is a forgotten Victorian word that means roughly *heebie-jeebies*—"That tunnel was so dark it gave me a fantod." It may seem an extraneous detail, but, like much of Gorey's whimsy, it is a carefully considered extraneous detail. Digression is the better part of valor.) Commercial publishers tried him out from time to time, with a remarkable lack of commercial success. So Gorey published himself, peddling his books practically door to door at New York bookstores, especially at that Valhalla of bookstoredom, the Gotham Book Mart. The books slowly attracted a small but extremely fervent cult that will now pay up to $250 for a first edition of an early book, or $1,000 or so for one of his small, meticulous drawings. Among his fans, Gorey acquired the reputation of a sinister man of mystery, possibly English, who never gave interviews, who divided his elegant life between the polite riches of Manhattan's Murray Hill and the fresh air of Cape Cod, swathed in furs, dripping with rings, remote, soigné, very cut-velvet, a man whose life was filled with the sort of recherché detail that makes his books so otherworldly. They expected to hold on to him forever, their very own delicate, possibly consumptive genius, deriving from him the kind of private pleasure one gets from rare colognes or manuscripts discovered in a dead grandmother's attic.

Andreas Brown changed all that, realizing that private pleasures very often do not pay the rent. He runs the Gotham Book Mart, which had published several of Gorey's books, and he became a sort of literary godfather to Gorey, finding him rare manuscripts, organizing exhibitions of his work, publishing a bibliography of available Gorey oeuvres, fanning the flames of the cult. He also likes Gorey. "People expect him to be rather macabre," Brown says. "He's not. He has a kind of way about him, a laugh like a disgruntled child, but underneath all that he's really rather warm and kind." But is he eccentric? "Of *course* he is. God, he's got five cats. He's got all those fur coats. *They* must cost $5,000 apiece."

Another of Brown's rare book customers at the Gotham was William Targ, editor at G.P. Putnam's. Brown began to give him first editions of Gorey's work, knowing that Gorey is an acquired but lasting taste, like a fondness for certain bitter aperitifs. "I wanted him to get hooked," said Brown, "and eventually he did." Delicate negotiations began. Brown tantalized Targ with the promise of large sales figures and swayed Gorey, who had always resisted the idea of a collection, by arguing that most people could no longer find him, let alone afford to read him. Gorey was also flattered by an advance from Targ, and a deal was made. Everybody was happy. Putnam's got a chunk of Gorey's foreign rights (his work is quite popular in Europe), and they got a beautiful book for a relatively small $5,000 advance. Gorey, in his precise way, supervised the production of the book himself, hand-lettering the table of contents and the copyright information, laying out the pages, designing the cover. There is not one word of set type in the book, which is called *Amphigorey,* a play on another Victorian word, *amphigouri,* meaning a nonsense verse. A collection of 15 of Gorey's singularly personal and peculiar works, the book went on the market in time for Christmas of 1972. It won various prizes for design, got on several ten-best lists, and went on to do something even more surprising. It sold like hotcakes, beyond Brown's wildest dreams. When the book came out in paperback, it sold 40,000 copies, and Putnam's went back to press for 50,000 more, at the same time going ahead with a sequel, *Amphigorey Too.*

So now, after 25 quiet years, Gorey is a hot act. Prices for first editions have shot up, prices for drawings have doubled. The ubiquitous Peter Bogdanovich is interested in movie rights. A stage version of *Dracula,* with sets and costumes by Gorey, is trying to come to New York. Money is being

PHOTOGRAPH BY CARL FISCHER

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Little Zooks, of whom no one was fond,

They shot towards the roof and beyond;

raised for a film of Gorey's one un-illustrated prose work, a silent film script called *The Black Doll.* Cultists fume while the Gotham and Putnam's cashboxes jingle. Andreas Brown chuckles and says, "There is about to be in this country a Gorey explosion." And at the center of it all stands Edward Gorey himself, who cocks his head with shy, quizzical amusement: "A Gorey explosion? How *very* apt. Little bits of me all over the place. . . ."

Edward Gorey wanders into the Palm Court of the Plaza Hotel with the wan, distracted air of a child who has forgotten his destination and lost his name tag. Long arms. Long legs. The beautiful white beard of an admiral in some sparkling navy. A beige turtleneck decked with strings of beads, and a black, unreadable talisman on a gold chain. A fur coat, not lavish, one of those middle furs that bring to mind more a day in the Rockies than a night at the opera. A six-foot red and white muffler, hanging to his knees. Blue jeans far too short, pointing up the impeccable newness, the absolute unsullied qualities of his new white bucks, bought on a whim at Brooks. "You know how much white bucks *cost* now? What is the world coming to when a pair of *white bucks,* which you bought just because you remember having them as a child, costs $60? God, it's *outrageous."*

One dresses either to disguise or to reveal. Edward Gorey slumps into a chair, speaking in his very oh-my-dear dowager voice, flashing long fingers covered with primitive bands of gold, a dozen or so, shaking hands in an awkward, unfocused gesture, chattering in his hesitant way, bringing to life with every move and gesture the matronly persona of one of his many anagrammatical pseudonyms, Mrs. Regera Dowdy, with all the queenly slovenliness the name implies.

Yes, Gorey catches the light. He shines in the Palm Court, except for the eyes, which collect every shadow of the ormolu tea palace. It is Gorey's eyes which pull you in, clear grey, limpid, darting to every corner of the large room, observing on the run your ear, the tip of your nose, the lay of your tie, never quite catching the full weight of another gaze. They are sad eyes, almost lifeless. Say, then, that Edward Gorey comes in as a kind of jeweled Eeyore, comforting himself with the riches and trinkets he does not find in direct stares, trivializing with sparkles and eccentric detail the weight and knowledge of his ponderous eyes.

His conversation is sprinkled with the sort of bon mots one suspects are rehearsed, but Gorey, his inventive mind having learned the form, can probably toss them off with an early disdain. "Now that Agatha Christie has died," he says, "the one thing that keeps me from suicide is, if I were to kill myself, how would I know who won next year's Academy Awards?" Charming, bitchy, energetic, until the talk turns to his own work, when he grows strangely distant and flip. He speaks about *The Curious Sofa,* his pornographic work, which, like Mae West, shows less but promises more. The book concerns a dark-eyed young flapper who is one day swept off a park bench and into a series of sexual encounters that somehow happen always just beyond the reader's gaze, a veritable Krafft-Ebing of possibilities involving any number of dogs, unidexters, dark-eyed ladies and young men who are all "exceptionally well made." In each illustration, the young lady, as she disports herself, eats a large bunch of grapes one by one, moving through it all with the air of a somnambulist, unmoved yet quite willing, more felt upon than feeling. Does the fact that Alice can sail through it all with the casual insouciance of a debutante enjoying a light summer buffet have any particular meaning? Gorey's eyes slide slowly by, resting at last on the shabby tea orchestra, which is trying to make "The Way We Were" sound at least vaguely Viennese. *"The Curious Sofa,"* he says in an accent that has never quite forgotten his native Chicago, "is simply a book about a girl who likes grapes." Why are all his characters so impassive in the face of the disasters that befall them? "I don't draw faces very well." Why does no one struggle? "I can't draw well enough to depict violence." Does he find his books gratuitously cruel to children? What about Charlotte Sophia in *The Hapless Child,* run over by her father, who leaps from his car to pick up the dying child, but "she was so changed he did not recognize her"? Isn't all that a little harsh? "You have to remember," Gorey answers, "that the father didn't *know* it was *his* child. And poor little Charlotte Sophia, she had such an unhappy life. She was better off out of it." But why should an innocent child suffer so terribly? "You know, a friend of mine once said that I dispense morals with the casual air of a shopkeeper weighing out tea. I suppose he's right." His eyes slow down for just one moment. "Oh, I know that the books are about something, not what they seem to be about . . . but I don't know what that other thing is." And he doesn't seem to care very much.

He does not, in fact, seem to care about very much of anything. He seems strangely distant, even from the very things he spends his life doing. The ballet, for instance. There is an apocryphal story among Goreyites that he has not missed a performance of the New York City Ballet since 1956. "That's not true," says Gorey. "I've missed a few. But the truth is, I don't

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Robert Goolrick, a New York free-lance writer, last reported for NEW TIMES *on Holly Woodlawn.*

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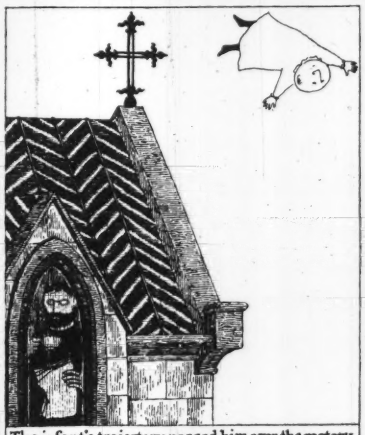

The infant's trajectory passed him over the rectory,

And into a lily-choked pond.

really know why I go at all. I don't really love the ballet. I just went once, in 1937, when the Ballet Russe came to Chicago, and they did a ballet called *Bacchanale,* with sets by Salvador Dali. I thought he was the cat's ass at the time, so I went, and I just sort of kept on going. Most ballets bore me right out of my tiny mind, except for Balanchine, who is really a great genius."

Possessions? "They don't really exist. I live in a one-room studio apartment where I've always lived, with a bed and a sort of bureau and a drawing table and 5,000 books. I guess I could afford to move now, but it would be an admission of defeat. . . . I don't really like New York, and as long as I keep the same apartment I'm just sort of passing through. The house on the Cape is a family thing, very austere, early American, not Edwardian at all, certainly." And England, which he recreates with such a loving hand? "I've never been there." He did go to Scotland once, traveling like Mr. Earbrass in *The Unstrung Harp,* about whom Gorey wrote, "Though he is a person to, whom things do not happen, perhaps they may when he is on the other side." "They didn't," says Gorey, grinning. "Nothing happened."

But aren't there a lot of fur coats? "Well, yes, I guess there are. I don't really know how many. I just somehow got one, and then got another, and then I got to be the sort of person whom people expected to wear fur coats. At least they keep me from buying more books, which I can't fit into my apartment, or into my *tiny mind."*

His tiny mind is a fiction. He draws masterfully, certainly well enough to express whatever he wants to. His books, often no more than 30 sentences long, are masterpieces of distillation, his prose a model of memorable austerity, capable of great beauty. He has a vast knowledge of literature, an acute sense of detail, a marvelous memory. He has moved through a genteel life full of intelligence and interest. Born in 1925 in Chicago, where his father was a reporter for the Hearst newspapers, Gorey once said that he was the sort of child who used to like to pretend epileptic fits on buses, but now says that he made that up, a convenience of the moment. He was neither outrageous nor remarkable as a child, he asserts. Smart, yes, but not eccentric. He lived not in a Victorian mansion with servants upstairs and down, but in a series of apartments, with his mother, who had divorced his father when Gorey was 11.

Talking about a harrowing work in which Millicent Frastley is kidnapped and sacrificed to large insects, he says only, "I wanted to use some illustrations I had seen....Poor Millicent. It wasn't her fault"

When Gorey was 27 they remarried, possibly explaining an odd limerick of his: "Each night father fills me with dread/ When he sits on the foot of my bed;/ I'd not mind that he speaks/ In gibbers and squeaks,/ But for seventeen years he's been dead." After four years in the Army, Gorey went to Harvard, where he studied French. Graduating in 1950, he remained in Boston, working with The Poet's Theater, living a hand-to-mouth existence, until finally he moved to New York, because "everybody was going there." In New York, he worked in the art department at Doubleday and published his first book.

Throughout, he has drawn his friends from the best minds of his generation: V.R. Lang, the Boston poetess and founder of The Poet's Theater ("the most infuriating woman I ever met"), Frank O'Hara, the poet and critic who was his roommate at Harvard for two years ("He lived a dangerous life; it's a wonder to me that Frank didn't die in some terrible way long before he did"), Edmund Wilson ("Well, he was so short, and I was so tall, and I have trouble hearing at parties, so I could never quite catch what he was saying"). The crowd at the Gotham, poets like John Ashberry, who taught him what *fantod* meant, dancers, choreographers, critics and editors like Jason and Barbara Epstein. He is, like it or not, an intellectual figure who has raced through English literature the way subway riders race through turnstiles, and none of it seems to impress him very much, except for one thing—the extraordinary detail.

"You want to know what interests me? True crime stories. Did you know that on the morning Lizzie Borden axed her parents, it was 97 degrees at 9:00 in the morning? Did you know that she sat down with her mother and father to a breakfast of cold mutton, mutton soup and bananas?" Or another story, clipped from the *New York Times.* "A young Japanese girl committed suicide. She was a simple, country girl who had come to the city and married, and was trying to be a modern Western housewife. Her husband liked bacon, which she had never seen in the country, and so she tried and tried to learn to cook it perfectly for him, bacon, this very Western thing, and she could never get it right, and so she killed herself. *She killed herself because she couldn't learn to cook bacon."*

Details, carefully chosen, carefully viewed. It is not so surprising that Gorey, whose work is filled with bizarre detail, can say, "I see no disparity between my books and real life. I try not to be mysterious. Mystery in writing is not in what you say but in how you say it, and I do, no matter what you might think, I do consider this the best of all possible worlds. I do think that things turn out for the best in the end."

Journalism is an odd trade, children. It is not always tap

dancing and lunch with Marcello Mastroianni, you know. These are real people, and one is torn between two pretenses, that of the psychoanalyst who asks deep, probing questions, and the old friend who does what old friends do, chats casually, avoids tender areas, accepts what comes for the comfortable charms it has. And really, what one is usually doing is striking some carefully considered but suitably raffish pose in the crystalline mirror of a more glittering personality.

Well, one does not play the psychoanalyst in the Palm Court, and yet it is hard to strike a suitable pose in the disquiet of Gorey's far-off eyes. One yearns for him to take his work more seriously, to have something to say about its obvious and obsessive themes. Instead, he is glib. He is a dilettante for whom detail is not so much a weltanschauung as a passing amusement.

Gorey is an intensely shy man. He is intelligent and kind. He is vulnerable, one feels. The eyes show it. Perhaps his explanations are good enough. Perhaps he even believes them. But a body of work, no matter how unaware the artist may be of his sources or his motives, has a meaning, or at least an implication, and this is particularly true of Gorey. Through 36 books, he has used his spare, elegant style to express an idea, one that is more important than amusing cocktail chatter, and that idea must be located, its growing popularity examined.

"They come from the movies," says Gorey. "That's why the illustrations all look like frames out of a movie. I used to go to a thousand movies a year." Or, talking about *The Insect God,* a particularly harrowing work in which Millicent Frastley is kidnapped and sacrificed to large insects, he will say, "The only reason I did that book was because I wanted to use some illustrations I had seen on cards at the Metropolitan Museum. Poor Millicent. It wasn't her fault." Well, the books are smarter than that, and the sources more diverse.

Gorey has started from a nineteenth-century sensibility, from the French Symbolist poets whom he studied at Harvard, from the hysterical Victorian sense of inevitable punishment for an inherent wickedness, the Victorian fear of open spaces which built tight, dark drawing rooms. He has journeyed through the sudden Edwardian break that opened into the reckless élan of Bloomsbury; and he has arrived in the end at a sort of whimsical paranoia that is very modern indeed. Gorey himself admits to a tremendous admiration for the Surrealists, although he claims he can't generally understand Surrealist literature. It is his Surrealist side that produces the strange juxtaposition of image in his work, the landscapes in which the unexpected is forced to occur. It also produces much of his humor. The jokes in Gorey's books are animated and highly private, and for Gorey, "it doesn't matter to me if readers get them or not. Some of them even I don't get anymore, although I remember thinking them quite funny at the time." They often take the form of references to other works, to the films of people like Ronald Firbank, or to real figures in the world of ballet or opera. Often, they seem to have no meaning at all, nor do they seem funny. For instance, in *The Blue Aspic,* Gorey's book about opera, the hero, Jasper Ankle, falls dead at the end, having killed the diva to whom he has devoted his life, crying, "J'ai trouve Hortense." Jasper does not speak in French, generally, and the diva's name is really Ortenzia. But if you look at a poem of Frank O'Hara's, a poem that concerns a Surrealist dream, you find that the last line is "I/ am an angel. Trouvez Hortense."

So Gorey may be arch, he may be obscure, but he is very modern. Baudelaire took a fear of the inanimate object, a certain knowledge that the tables and chairs he perceived were also watching him, and produced works of profound despair and obscenity. Gorey, with a nod to *Les Fleurs Du Mal,* writes *The Evil Garden,* in which his characters passively stroll through a park full of monstrous flowers that slowly devour the picnickers. Baudelaire found comfort in a dilettantism that was exact and calculated, clinging to the black draped rooms and the yellow gloves like a raft in a restless sea. Gorey seems merely to purchase things. The Bloomsbury group became an Edwardian symbol of licentious abandon, thriving on an aggressive determination to take chances, while, behind it all, cold-hearted Virginia Woolf walked from the Fabian Society because the guests were swimming naked in the pool at Cliveden. It is her coldness which Gorey carries with him. There was struggle in the movements to which Gorey is drawn. There was a fine tension to the thought. Gorey merely accepts. He is, in a sense, the poet anesthetized. He posits a world in which catastrophes are met wordlessly, with an almost imperceptible shake of the head, a dropped scarf, a sidelong look. He describes a world in which it is a breach of taste to struggle against the horror that is waiting, a world in which disaster is a staple of daily life. One of Gorey's favorite quotations, he says, is from a French writer, "The world is not what it purports to be . . . but it has no other meaning." There is no way to get to the truth, no way to save oneself from destruction. So one can only distance oneself, go on as best one can, while waiting for the blows to fall. In this there is a peculiar aptness to his time, to this year, an aptness that may explain his recent successes. Ours is increasingly an age of stridency and disaffection; Gorey's exaggerated sense of fate and his Surrealist paranoia suit us. They make light of the monstrosities we have viewed; they leaven the decline of passion.

Edward Gorey is a genius, but he is an odd genius, and his case is an odd one. The books suffer from overexposure. They seem, in collection, to be too obviously eccentric, too condescendingly glib. The images lose power in repetition. To a cultist, the discovery of a new book is a rare thing, slightly musty, scented in lavender and old sachets, colored at the rarer end of the rainbow. There is a danger, now that his works are readily available, that Gorey's inbred, hothouse blooms will seem altogether too outré in the glare of the limelight.

In one of the books there is a self-portrait which shows Gorey slumped in a chair, his face hidden from view, with a simple caption that reads, "O Rage. O Desespoir." It is the bitter fury of the isolated, the unrecognized. Gorey's is a funny dilemma. Because he is good, there is the inevitable urge to show him off to a large audience and make a lot of dollars. But the wider his audience, the less valuable he seems.

Edward Gorey sits still for a moment in the Palm Court. "There was a long period in my life," he says, "when I felt as though I were living under a glass bell. . . . I have a lot of trouble with the real world. I labor most of the time under the most terrible sense of unreality."

He jumps up from his chair. "Oh God, I just barely got up in time for luncheon, and then I left that, so I got *here* late, and now I've stayed here too long, I'm late for supper, and *then* I'm going to be late for the ballet." He starts for the door, stops and turns. "I hope you got something for your article," he says. "If you didn't, just make something up. It all comes out the same in the end." And then he's gone, his muffler snaking through the air behind him.

Well, I didn't make it up. There is an air of light, of brightness about him. But while in obscurity he has the glow of a poet, in the spotlight, on the silver screen, he may show merely the glitter of cleverness, the fleeting sparkle of the dilettante. It occurs to me that Edward Gorey's light may best illuminate when hidden under a basket. ●

Music

Eric Carmen, all by himself

By Janet Maslin

A friend of mine, age 26 or so, teaches a film course to college freshmen, and one of the pictures he likes to show is *A Hard Day's Night*. But he's begun to run up against a discouraging situation lately, one which makes him contemplate revising his syllabus: his kids are getting to be too young to understand the movie, because they're too young to understand about the Beatles. When he talks about its having been impossible to *hear* the picture the first couple of times you saw it, on account of all the screaming in the theater, his class just thinks he's crazy; after all, these kids were only five or six years old when the Fab Four made their first historic appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. They're at least three pop-culture generations removed from Beatlemania, because new pop generations arise at astonishingly brief intervals, and what excites one may barely even interest the one that succeeds it—a fact of which Eric Carmen and his now-defunct Raspberries were at one time all too painfully aware.

Though the Raspberries had a string of hit singles to their credit, hardly anyone who isn't a rock critic remembers the band now; certainly no one remembers their albums, which received little attention even then. The Raspberries were pegged as a mere Top-40 act right from the first, when in 1971 they burst out of Cleveland (sic) to deliver their own souped-up version of the Mersey Beat. "Capitol didn't know what to make of us," says former lead singer Carmen, "and their attitude resulted in the eventual ruination of the band on all levels—creative, business, personal, everything. With infinite bureaucratic record company wisdom, they listened to our first album and decided to release 'Don't Wanna Say Goodbye,' which was a five-and-a-half-minute ballad and the first cut, completely ignoring the fact that 'Go All The Way' was on that album. So it screamed up to about number 85 on the charts and then died immediately. Then, when they decided to release 'Go All The Way' and it went Top-10, they said, 'Oh! That's what they are, they're a three-minute singles band.' So they took us to the Capitol tower and said, 'We have interviews lined up for you all day today.' And we said, 'Great!—*Rolling Stone? Creem? Circus? Phonograph Record?*' We sat in a conference room, people would come in every 45 minutes, and about the fifth time someone asked our favorite color we began to say, 'By the way, where are you from?' 'Oh, *Tiger Beat.*' *'Fave.' '16.'* Capitol had geared its whole campaign toward turning us into the new Osmonds."

PHOTOGRAPH BY J. BERNDT

Eric Carmen: copious charm and unaffected enthusiasm.

The Raspberries weren't exactly neo-Osmond material, though, even if they did perform in matching suits. ("We decided that the only way we could make an impression on people, when we walked on the stage to open for the Doobie Brothers or something, was to shock them into remembering who we were," says Carmen, who also sports a diligently fluffed coiffure and a nose more perfect than those Nature usually provides. "And suits seemed like a logical thing to do. The logic of it escapes me at the moment, but at the time we thought it was a good idea.") Their material, affectionately derived from early Beatles, Beach Boys, Stones and Who (with an occasional touch of Phil Spector production), clearly thrust them into the post-Beatles breach, as a kind of third-generation equivalent to second-generation Beatlephiles like the Bee Gees and Badfinger. Even more so than their predecessors, the Raspberries could turn out uncanny imitations of their favorites, but what made this group special was the way it adhered even more closely to the spirit of the music than to the letter. The Raspberries' first three albums, and particularly *Starting Over*, their fourth, were free and unself-conscious enough to recall the days when the best rock was meant simply to be enjoyed; this band's memories were of the pre-*Sgt. Pepper* days, way before the music demanded to be taken seriously. Which is hardly to suggest that the Raspberries were ever frivolous about it; they loved their material, and the great songs it echoed, far too much to start camping around. Carmen's lead vocals would entreat an imaginary date to "go all the way" or to let him "woo [her] all night on the beach" far too earnestly to sound coy, even though many of the group's wet-dreamier lyrics had been written to convey a sardonic edge. But even if they had intended something of a put-on with one of their last great songs, "Overnight Sensation," they still would have been hard-pressed to come up with a sweeter declaration of their own commitment to rock and roll. "Well I know it sounds funny," began the song, "But I'm not in it for the money, no/I don't need no reputation/And I'm not in it for the show/I just *want a hit record*/Want to *hear* it on the *ra-di-o*."

The Raspberries' immensely attractive dedication to their music wasn't enough to hold them together, though. They were beset by a number of difficulties, not the least of which was the fact that they had come along at exactly the wrong time, when a new generation was too young to grasp the allure of what they had patterned themselves on and older audiences dismissed them as rock reactionaries. Another problem was that the four of them just couldn't get along. Though the band had "originally started on that utopian concept of the democratic foursome—which is ridiculous, since it presumes

that there's a perfectly equal 25 percent division of talent right down the line," says Carmen, "the rest of the band didn't have a whole lot of creative suggestions, other than that they thought what I was doing was ass-backward." Two of the original Raspberries left to start an as-yet-to-be-heard-from band of their own, a third headed for California, and Carmen beat a retreat to Cleveland, which is still his home.

The story hardly ends there, of course. One day Clive Davis made a pilgrimage to Ohio, heard Carmen play a few songs with only his own living room piano for accompaniment, and immediately signed him as a solo artist to Davis' then-new label, Arista Records. Carmen made an album, produced by Jimmy Ienner (who had also done the Raspberries), and one cut became an instant hit with only a minimum of help from Arista's promotion department; the ballad, "All By Myself," resembles "Mandy" in its ability to gently worm its way under one's skin. But Carmen is far from being another Barry Manilow, though his album's more grandiose moments suggest as much. *Eric Carmen* is impressive, but it often bogs down; it's as if the impulse that led him to tack a flurry of gull squawks and wave noises onto the otherwise exquisitely simple "On The Beach," on the Raspberries' *Side 3*, had this time been given a full string section to cater to its whims. Only a few new songs, like "Last Night" and the irresistibly punchy "That's Rock 'N Roll," give much sense of what makes Carmen so special. But even the slower, more so-so numbers make it quite apparent that Eric Carmen is finally on the verge of becoming a very big deal.

This may not be the album to do it, and this may not be exactly the time—Carmen, when last heard from, was on tour as the warm-up act for the Sweet, a British teen-scream act that attracts the very audience he may be trying to get away from. But sooner or later, Carmen's copious charm and unaffected enthusiasm are bound to start showing through again, both on his records and in his stage act — even though he himself professes surprise at the fact that this newly elaborate production strikes anyone as a change ("It's very interesting that people see a big difference between the last Raspberries album and this one, because I don't see it, personally"). In any case, Eric Carmen certainly will get there, even if he takes his time about it. "It seems the age limit has moved up quite a bit from what it used to be," he chuckles. "Us fledgling rock and rollers are all 26 or 27 these days."

***Station to Station,** *David Bowie* (RCA). This is a sly one, not likely to make much of an impression the first 15 or 20 times you hear it, and so we probably shouldn't recommend it to any save the extremely patient. But Bowie, in his latest incarnation, so curiously commingles such seemingly unrelated ingredients as crooning, latino rhythms and the Robot Hustle that we can't help admiring his utterly soulless ingenuity. There's a palpable (but utterly unfathomable) dramatic intensity to these machinations, and an odd originality as well.

****Second Childhood,** *Phoebe Snow* (Columbia). Snow's smoothly produced, long-awaited second installment suffers from a mild case of the blahs, and from glaringly bad lyrics at times; the plaintive intensity of her first effort is here replaced by a much less interesting calm. "Two-Fisted Love" and "All Over" are much fresher than the rest.

*****Frampton Comes Alive,** *Peter Frampton* (A&M). Guitar virtuoso's otherwise excellent first live album is marred by production that shows off an appreciative audience to the worst possible advantage; every lick of Frampton's seems to be followed by an adoring whoop from the crowd. Still, his prowess and energy make their attitude understandable.

Television

Talk is cheap

By Richard Corliss

In the wake of disaster movies, we now have the first disaster network: NBC. Its prime-time schedule is a shambles: after the World Series gave it an early ratings edge, Sarnoff's Pride has fallen to a distant third. Fortunately, the network has a flock of Nielsen winners (and thus moneymakers) outside its prime-time skein: the early-morning *Today* show, the midday soap operas and game shows and the late-night *Tonight* and *Tomorrow* programs. After midnight, Johnny Carson is the undisputed king; but *Tomorrow*'s Tom Snyder seems to see himself as the crown prince.

I don't know a soul in New York who doesn't abominate Tom Snyder. But I do know that Manhattan isn't America; people on this spectered isle think of themselves as prisoners of war in some high-rent stalag of the occupying forces. So I asked the opinion of two correspondents from the outside world—and, sure enough, my mother-in-law thinks Tom is terrific, and my mother thought he was nice until he let his hair grow too long.

What they say makes some sense, since Tom Snyder is the apotheosis of the Anchorman as Celebrity. TV viewers don't listen to the news, they watch it—which means watching the newscaster. Agnew & Co. were right: David Brinkley's ironic eyebrows did have a stronger editorial effect than anything he said. And the networks were being disingenuous when they argued that the Nixon Administration simply wanted to "kill the messenger." On TV, the messenger is the message.

Tom Snyder has understood all this and taken advantage of it (on his nightly New York newscast and as host of the *Tomorrow* show), but his personality works strangely against the medium. In McLuhan terms, his style is too "hot," too preeningly assertive. He thinks of himself as a comer, but he comes too soon and too often. He sees himself as a successful synthesis of NBC's two Johns—Chancellor and Carson—but he's really a blend of two other traditions: the old-fashioned front-page reporter and the loud-mouthed sitcom husband. Not two Johns but two Walters: Winchell and Findlay.

Snyder's a real TV baby. As a boy he followed John Cameron Swayze's changing neckties; now viewers have been able to chart the change in Snyder's hair color, from coal black to (in Marvin Kitman's words) prematurely

orange. He can sense when the camera is on him—unlike Sally Quinn, he'd never need to be told what the red light meant—and plays to it shamelessly. But after spending almost half his life in TV, he still comes on like a kid on his first date, masking insecurity with bravado.

As an interviewer, Snyder is no Mike Wallace; he's too busy striking "attitudes" to ask tough questions. With an intellectually respectable guest like Fred Friendly, he'll wait for a close-up, then furrow his brow as if trying to hatch a profundity. With a media rival like Dick Cavett, he'll have a hard time trying to control his pleasure that *he's* on network TV four nights a week and Cavett isn't. With his usual guests—the hookers, astrologers and assassination buffs who have helped make Snyder's show *The National Enquirer of the Air*—he'll show a smarmy sympathy that is no less grotesque for seeming real. Snyder's ideal guest was Erica Jong, the Sappho-Charo of best-sellerdom; their meeting, last July 4 at 4:00 a.m., sent up early fireworks at the perfect meeting of ego and id. But, like a firecracker, Snyder can be expected to make a big noise and burn himself out.

Johnny Carson is something else, something smoother and longer-lasting—which has a lot to do with why Carson earns twice as much for a single 90-minute *Tonight* show ($20,000) as the average American makes in a year. At the risk of sounding pompous, I'd say that Carson's appeal lies in his personification of what the Average American likes to think of himself as: witty but not intellectual, cheeky but not arrogant, irreverent but not malicious, naughty but not lewd, the Golden Mean and not the Lowest Common Denominator—the very model of charm and professionalism. Even if you think that Carson's formula of entertainment without excitement has made *The Tonight Show* about as nourishing as a Sara Lee Coffee Cake, you have to admit that the man is a superb professional.

Courting the public by chewing the fat: H-e-e-e-re's Johnnie, king of TV talk, with (clockwise) Tom Snyder, Merv Griffin, Dick Cavett and Mike Douglas.

Like the best stand-up comics, Carson is, above all, very smart. When a guest feeds him a straight line—or, for that matter, a punch line—his computer mind can practically be heard humming, in the split-second before his response, as it races through a thousand possible puns, put-downs, old jokes and double entendres. Ta-pocketa-pocketa: out comes the zinger, pre-censored and perfectly timed. It's an almost abstract pleasure to watch this special (and very American) intelligence at work. And this intelligence is matched by the cool grace of a Fred Astaire, a Dorothy Hamill. Nothing showy—it just gets the job done.

Carson's job is to win the ratings that sell the advertising that fills 18 minutes of every *Tonight* show (at $13,000 per 30-second spot, which comes to about $40 million for the network alone, plus some substantial small change for the affiliates' local commercials). He does this by providing tension-free entertainment. Jack Paar, Carson's predecessor, had become famous by doing just the opposite: each program was at least a soap opera (Will Jack Get Through the Show? What Is Paar Really Like?), at most a supra-video event. Think of memorable Paar *Tonight* shows and you think of Gore Vidal excoriating William Buckley, or Paar attacking Ed Sullivan, or Paar walking off the show in a battle with the NBC censors over a "water closet" joke.

Carson realized (had *he* studied McLuhan?) that at midnight viewers were looking for a cordial nightcap instead of a Molotov cocktail. Think of memorable Carson *Tonight* shows and you think of Johnny squirting whipped cream over the bulge in Burt Reynolds' leather pants, or being peed on by a baby puma, or emceeing a Singing Dog competition—situations, which allow for a kind of controlled spontaneity. And Carson is *always* in control of the show, of himself. Paar was a bundle of exposed nerves; Carson, as Ed McMahon has said, "packs a tight suitcase." Journalists aside, few people seem very eager to know What Johnny

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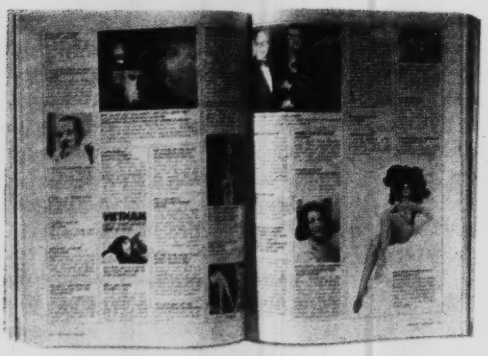

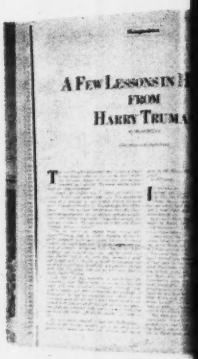

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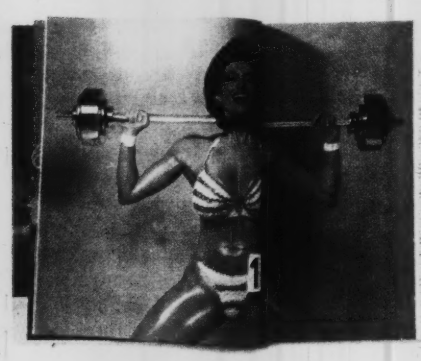

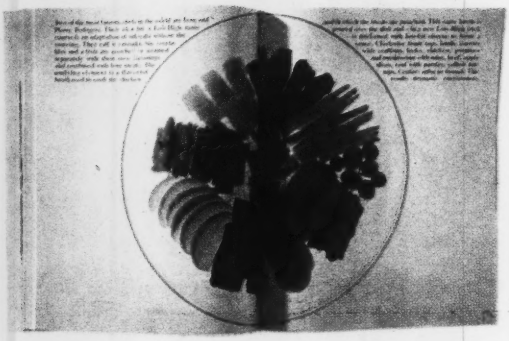

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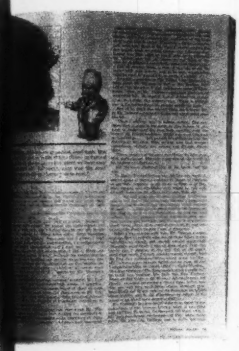

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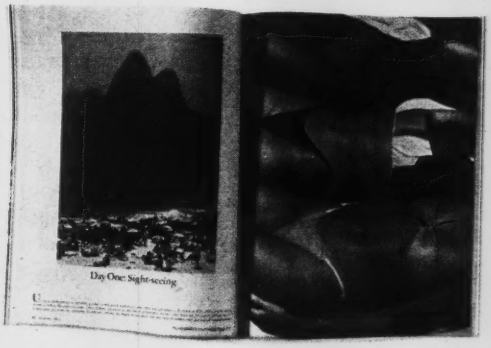

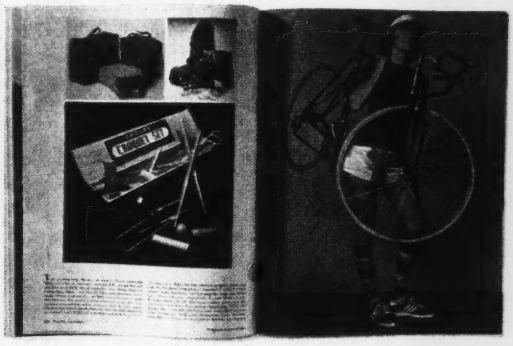

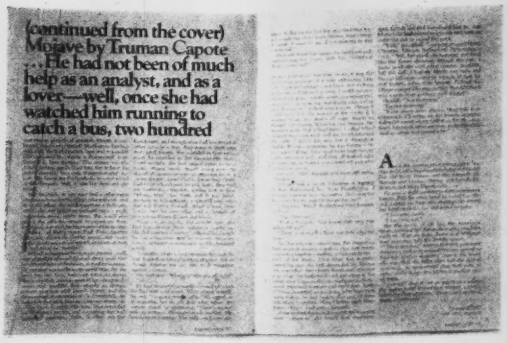
(continued from the cover)
Mojave by Truman Capote
. . . He had not been of much help as an analyst, and as a lover—well, once she had watched him running to catch a bus, two hundred
A

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Carson Is Really Like. Or, if they do wonder, they decide he is what he appears to be: a man whose job is being funny, and who's very good at his job.

So Carson is probably more respected by his public than he is liked. The respect *he* is aiming for is that of his peers. During his opening monologue, he "works to the band" in the great Borscht Belt tradition. An adoring middle-American audience could hardly be expected to approve of, say, a joke about Ernest Borgnine and Ethel Merman being divorced because of "irreconcilable faces," or a reference, the night of Patty Hearst's capture, to the police finding her "at home with Howard Hughes watching *The Invisible Man*." My guess is that the viewers who find these (relatively timid) jokes too hip endure them to see Carson bomb—for then he's at his best. After 13 years, his comeback shticks ("You didn't boo me when I fought for you in Okinawa, folks," or a nimble soft-shoe as the band strikes up "Tea for Two") have become rituals. But the audience loves that too, and Carson knows it.

Indeed, he's made *The Tonight Show* into a series of calculatedly endearing rituals. Ed McMahon's drinking, Doc Severinsen's flakiness, Tommy Newsom's torpor have been carefully nurtured as idiosyncrasies Carson can bounce gags off when things get dull. It's nothing new—Jack Benny and Fred Allen built successful radio shows around their supporting players' humors—but Carson has extended the ploy to include a couple of dozen frequent guests. Each of these "regulars" has an identifiable personality (which may not have much to do with his "real" behavior, or even with his traditional stage persona) that interacts with Carson's. It makes for a sort of sub-Saroyan rep company, and not one peopled exclusively by "lovable characters"; abrasive types like Don Rickles and Robert Blake have shown that, on *The Tonight Show*, a tractable contempt can breed familiarity.

Many of these guests appear on competing talk shows, but the hosts themselves offer Carson little competition. The late Dick Cavett seemed to provide a felicitous blending of Event (Paar) and Entertainment (Carson) but could hardly be expected to triumph over the opposition of both Carson and his own network, ABC. Merv Griffin and Mike Douglas appeal to the "homemaker" mentality: their programs are broadcast mostly in the afternoons and have a homemade look about them, with the seams too often showing. Though both began their careers as big-band singers, and made a few movies (Griffin was billed ninth in *The Phantom of the Rue Morgue*, Douglas was the voice of Prince Charming in Disney's *Cinderella*), they now exist, unlike Carson, only as personalities. And aside from Douglas' unflappability, and Griffin's edgy insecurity, there's very little *personality* to respond to in either of them. Douglas has celebrities co-host his show each week, and Griffin has programmed many "theme shows," but their respective skeins have little of the shape or rhythm you can find in *The Tonight Show* when Carson is at his best.

Or, for that matter, when he's there at all. Carson, who turned 50 this past year, has sat at his host's desk less and less frequently. The joke logo, "*The Tonight Show*, With Guest Host Johnny Carson," is no joke anymore, as the *New York Daily News* recently pointed out: over a six-month period last year Carson was *off* his own show more than he was on it. (NBC says its ratings are not significantly affected by his absence, and that ad rates remain constant, since it's the show that's being sold rather than the star.)

He did show up, however, for his thirteenth anniversary program last October, which featured highlights of past shows. One clip showed Carson, McMahon and Severinsen made up as they might look doing *The Tonight Show* in the year 2000, with the three still milking the same old yuks. It put me in mind of a 1964 Carson show in which Jeane Dixon (having traded places with Vaughn Meader as a Camelot-made celebrity by prophesying President Kennedy's assassination) went on to predict that Carson would still be hosting the program 30 years hence.

It could happen—with Carson as a once-a-week guest host?—and if it does it will be interesting to see whether Carson turns into a freeze-dried version of himself, with the fossilized gestures of the "2000" skit, and becomes not a performer but an institution (as Pauline Kael once wrote of Rosalind Russell). Most likely he'll still be charming audiences with his smile—the smile of a little boy who knows it helps him get what he wants. The real clue to Carson, though, is in his tiny eyes, which look out warily, and which reveal... nothing.

Books

A talent for life

By Geoffrey Wolff

The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps *By Terrence Des Pres.* Oxford (218 pp., $10).

Ena Weiss, a doctor and a Jew, was asked a question and answered it: "How did I keep alive in Auschwitz? My principle is: myself first, second and third. Then nothing. Then myself again—and then all the others." The conflict, as Terrence Des Pres writes, is classic: "Help one another, every man for himself." His book is a speculation about the procedures for survival in the extreme situations of German and Russian concentration camps, at both the tactical and moral levels. It is also a prolonged disputation against the widely held belief that camp victims for the most part either "died like sheep," as the phrase goes, or survived at the expense of their brothers and sisters.

Perhaps the harshest, and certainly the most influential, study of camp victims is *The Informed Heart* (1943), by Bruno Bettelheim, himself a prisoner of the German camps. According to Bettelheim, camp victims typically regressed to the conditions of infancy, and lacked courage, intelligence, generosity and social skills: "They appeared to be pathological liars, were unable to restrain themselves, unable to separate clearly between reality and their wishful or anxious daydreams." So debased did Bettelheim find his camp colleagues that he feared for his own cultural bearings: "How could I protect myself from becoming as they are?"

Bettelheim and the ranks of psychologists and psychoanalysts whose

studies of camp victims have followed his testimony and his thesis make much of the fact that inmates, like infants, were preoccupied with food and excretion, a characteristic of "regression to, and fixation on, pre-oedipal stages," as one of them concludes. It is among Des Pres' purposes to restore these matters to their contexts in reality, and not incidentally to redress a slander and intellectual grotesquerie. Inmates thought persistently about food because they were starving, and they thought about excrement because they were covered with it. That is, they were caked not only with their own shit, but with their colleagues':

"Everybody in the block had typhus . . . it came to Belsen Bergen in its most violent, most painful, deadliest form. The diarrhea caused by it became uncontrollable. It flooded the bottom of the cages, dripping through cracks into the faces of the women lying in the cages below. . . ." This survivor's recollection is matched by many more, from other camps. It was a matter of camp policy to prevent sufficient access to latrines. As in everything the Nazis inflicted upon their prisoners, there was a reason for this policy: caked in filth, stinking, the prisoners were loathsome to one another, and so they were easier to murder, just as an animal is easier to kill than a man, and an insect easier to stomp to death than an animal.

The Survivor will without doubt provoke great controversy among sociologists and psychologists. Its polemical intentions will draw Bruno Bettelheim's defenders into an armed ring around his theories, and the astonishing thing about all this—and it must astonish Des Pres, a young professor of English at Colgate, more than anyone—is that such a book as *The Survivor* was not written decades ago, or that it ever needed to have been written at all. Why is it necessary to remind people of the context of camp victims' behavior? Why, as Des Pres asks, is it "easy to believe, despite the contradiction, that survivors were infantile *and* that they were cunning manipulators using every kind of betrayal and base trick to stay alive?" A group of psychoanalysts convened to present papers on the meaning of the camp experience and the behavior of survivors of the camps, and when they were finished a colleague summarized their judgments: "They all stifled their true feelings, they all denied the dictates of conscience and social feeling in hope of

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survival, and they were all warped and distorted as a result."

The subject is a tar baby: come at it tentatively, or respectfully, and still you will stick to it. Come at it with a rhetoric you believe fitting for its awful enactments, and someone will accuse you of trading in counterfeit sentiments. Come at it with the detached voice of science, and you will be charged with heartlessness. George Steiner, a kind of custodian, almost an archivist, of the literature of the holocaust, escaped Paris during the transportations. He titled an essay "A Kind of Survivor," but looking at that title, tentative as it is, he felt obliged to begin with the words "not literally." He was not *there*. And what happened *there*, as he rightly suspects, is beyond the reach of all language, and certainly beyond the reach of the language of someone who was not *there*.

So the central facts of the survivor's life are secrets hidden from everyone else. Secrets breed suspicion and anger; they multiply ignorance. It is not that the survivors themselves have closed themselves around their experience in order to hide it from the awareness of humankind. Far from it: Des Pres and many others before him have made note of the compulsion on the part of survivors to bring the darkness of their days to light, to "record!" as Chaim Kaplan wrote again and again while composing his diary of the Warsaw Ghetto. The written stories of survivors are many, full of particulars, but words won't bear the load. They can be used for any purpose, so full of paradox are they, so full of surprise, so full of such candor as Ena Weiss' explanation of how she made it alive through Auschwitz.

A recent instance demonstrates the murky character of this matter. A few days ago Anatole Broyard, writing about Des Pres in the *New York Times*, singled out an image from the book that had struck him: "Some naked women were waiting to be herded into a gas chamber. The S.S. commander of the detail, on learning that one of the women was a dancer, ordered her to dance. She did, and that is Mr. Des Pres' message: that, even on the rim of the grave, we must dance." Broyard's misreading of this anecdote is breathtaking, and exemplary. The story of the lady is in fact told by Bettelheim, thus: "Once, a group of naked prisoners about to enter the gas chamber stood lined up in front of it. In some way the commanding SS officer learned that one of the women prisoners had been a dancer. So he ordered her to dance for him. She did, and as she danced, she approached him, seized his gun, and shot him down. She too was immediately shot to death."

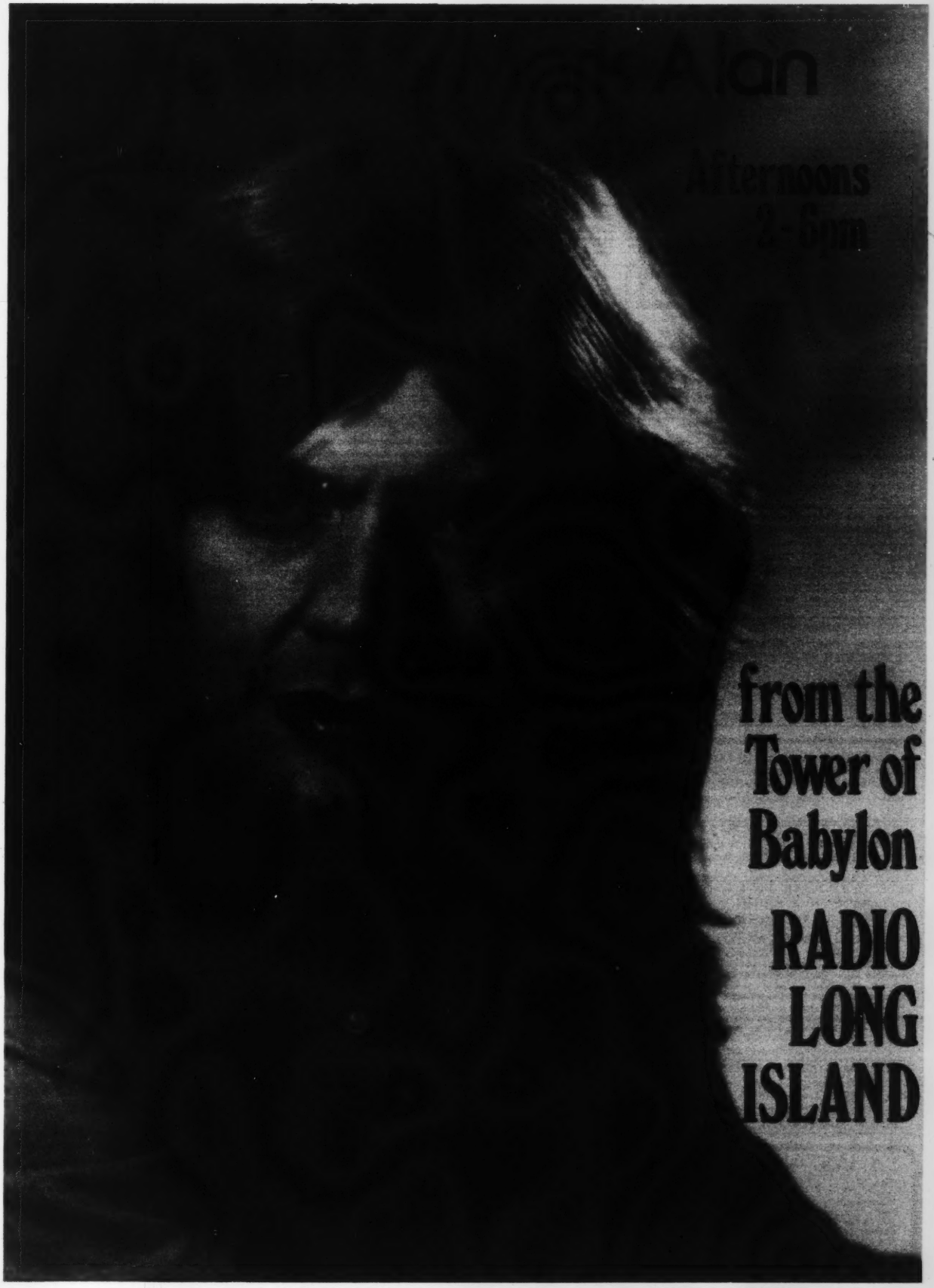
It was not for love of dancing that she danced, but to commit murder, as Des Pres writes: "It is heroic, but it is still suicide." Bruno Bettelheim's contempt for his fellow inmates stems in no small measure from their failure to adhere to those principles of chivalry and heroic conduct that were brought to their brightest flower of expression in Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. Some did act like knights, faced with the serial humiliations of the camps, and they were dangerous to their fellows. Des Pres tells of a man who told his barrack-mates one night that next day he would commit suicide by attacking a guard. Very noble, of course, but there was a hitch. The Germans retaliated against such gestures by killing everyone in a barrack when one of its members rebelled. By killing himself, the man would provoke reprisals against 50 others. His barrack-mates tried to dissuade him. They weren't certain whether they succeeded. So they killed him.

To survive was the only decency, and no one survived without help, without being taught the ropes when he arrived, without being made the beneficiary of the complex underground trade that was carried on. The sick were propped up during lineups and fed. People shared, even gave gifts, pathetic gifts, perhaps the only symbolic gestures indulged in during those years. It is Des Pres' argument, and I believe him entirely, that the misreading of camp behavior has been caused by a refusal to face it plain, by a preference for a symbolic masking, the very life of psychoanalysis. Anatole Broyard's misreading of the lady's dance is an attempt to extract beauty from an episode characterized by bleak, raw courage.

The manner in which people with full bellies respond toward food is subject to analysis on many levels, as ritual and as symbol. So, too, the manner in which people with toilets respond to excretion. But where life is already at the bedrock, surfaces and interiors are one, things are merely what they seem to be. Some "merely!" Someone manages, God knows how, to make it through. He is alive. He turns a corner and faces a drunken guard, who shoots him in the face. Someone else watches this, and is instructed, as if such instruction were necessary, against hope. But this one is lucky, makes it through, stands among us to testify against the even greater peril of despair. He is said to have survived *merely:* he *merely* survived. In the context, the adverb is a calumny.

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Evensee concentration camp inmates at liberation: survival was the only decency.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Chip off the old spud

Final Tribute

By Lewis Archibald

Well, it was bad enough when the hot dog started shriveling further and further into the bun (it's a good two bites away now). And, okay, I know already, Cracker Jack no longer contains more than three peanuts per box and the holes in Life Savers have grown well past the quarter-inch mark.

But now the potato chip has come under attack. Threatened by that unearthly phalanx of posturing synthetics that has already ousted the sweetly winsome Maple Syrup, the once mighty Whipped Cream and that paragon of the breakfast table, the Morning Orange Juice. Indeed, those very same synthetics whose cream, bacon and sausage substitute divisions already seem determined to reduce the cow and pig families to zoo dependents status.

It still hurts most with the potato chip. Because the chip is both individualistic and defenseless, so shimmering in its multishapes and structures, so delicate in those little grease lines etched across it like age marks on a tree. Certainly it is one of the few, the very few graceful foods. Drop a pretzel to the floor, and it falls with the certainty of wet wash. Let a potato chip drift away, and it develops sudden similarities to a petal. Snowflake. Feather.

After all, anyone can eat a cracker; it takes a certain know-how, a quiet daring, to go up against a potato chip. One of the few joys that extends from childhood into the cocktail hour is fitting your mouth around that chip, stretching yourself, getting it all in. And knowing that each chip will be different. A new contortion. Another level of stress. There's always something unexpected—and thus exhilarating—about chomping potato chips. It's a contest in a way, good exercise too.

Which is why it's so disheartening to see automation glower over all that free spirit, automation that comes from Procter & Gamble with the deceptively mild name of "Pringle's" and takes the form of multi-identical wafers of a "correct" size, the color of institutional paint and all stacked in tennis ball cans. Which no doubt makes things easier on the conveyor belt and the loading platform but is hell when you're just trying to get your hands on a munchie.

That shipping ease is part of Pringle's "revolutionary breakthrough." Another is the added preservatives, mono- and di-glycerides and ascorbic acid that keeps Pringle's on the shelf long after its de-lay-cious brethren have been retired to the spoilage bins.

Taste naturally isn't the real heart of the matter here. Potatoes never have tasted like much; that's why so many fancy things have been done with them. You've got so much more to hide. Okay, so the synthetics do tend to taste

less of salt and grease and more of Lemon Pledge. The point is that in a test of true chipness, can these newcomers hope to compare against the old champeen? And that doesn't mean crispness or salt content or even the aesthetics of curve proportion relative to some Golden Parabola somewhere. I mean the nitty-gritty moments when potato chips affect our lives, such as:

1) Tensile Strength. Or, how much dip can a new chip take before cracking up under the strain?

2) The Fragmentation Factor. Or, can the new chips be successfully ground into the rug in such a way that more than just a light vacuuming is needed?

3) Gravitational Pull. Or, when found floating in the punch bowl, will the new chips sink quietly or self-assertively drape themselves over an ice cube and stick it out to the bitter end?

4) Splotch Radius. Or, just how large a grease stain will the new chips leave on the most conspicuous part of a shirt or blouse?

The results of applied testing at a local beer blast were inconclusive. Pringle's really came out fighting in the fragmentation factor but were badly behind Wise and Lays in gravitational pull and woefully deficient in tensile strength. All splotch radii were about the same. Conclusion: in my opinion Pringle's on a purely scientific basis has not yet earned the right to the title "chip."

But it's got it anyway. The F.D.A. has given Pringle's permission to call itself a bona fide potato chip despite stringent protests from the makers of real potato chips and some state politicians. It's just the latest round in a long battle between the "chemical soup" manufacturers and gustatory-minded ecologists, with the federal government doing its customary bit of camp following on both sides. The public's attitude is more depressing still. Estimates of sales (P&G isn't talking) give Pringle's as high as 25 percent of the market in some areas. Enough that some real potato chip manufacturers, such as Frito-Lay, are working on similar synthetics in similar cans.

It's all becoming very reminiscent of *Soylent Green*, a 1973 sci-fi epic that went almost unnoticed. In it an upcoming population had been primed to feel a mass craving for a certain green cracker and was lustily staging raids to get more. The kicker was that the cracker was made of human beings, Nabisco and Forest Lawn having presumably worked something of a merger deal in the interests of the public good, with the result that at last Cain could be answered, every man was inextricably his brother's keeper. The final switch inherent in the film was that upon hearing said news, virtually no one—not even the audience—gave a damn.

See ya on the "bread" lines. ●

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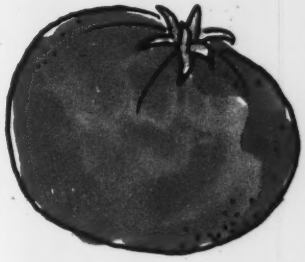
You say and we say  .

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